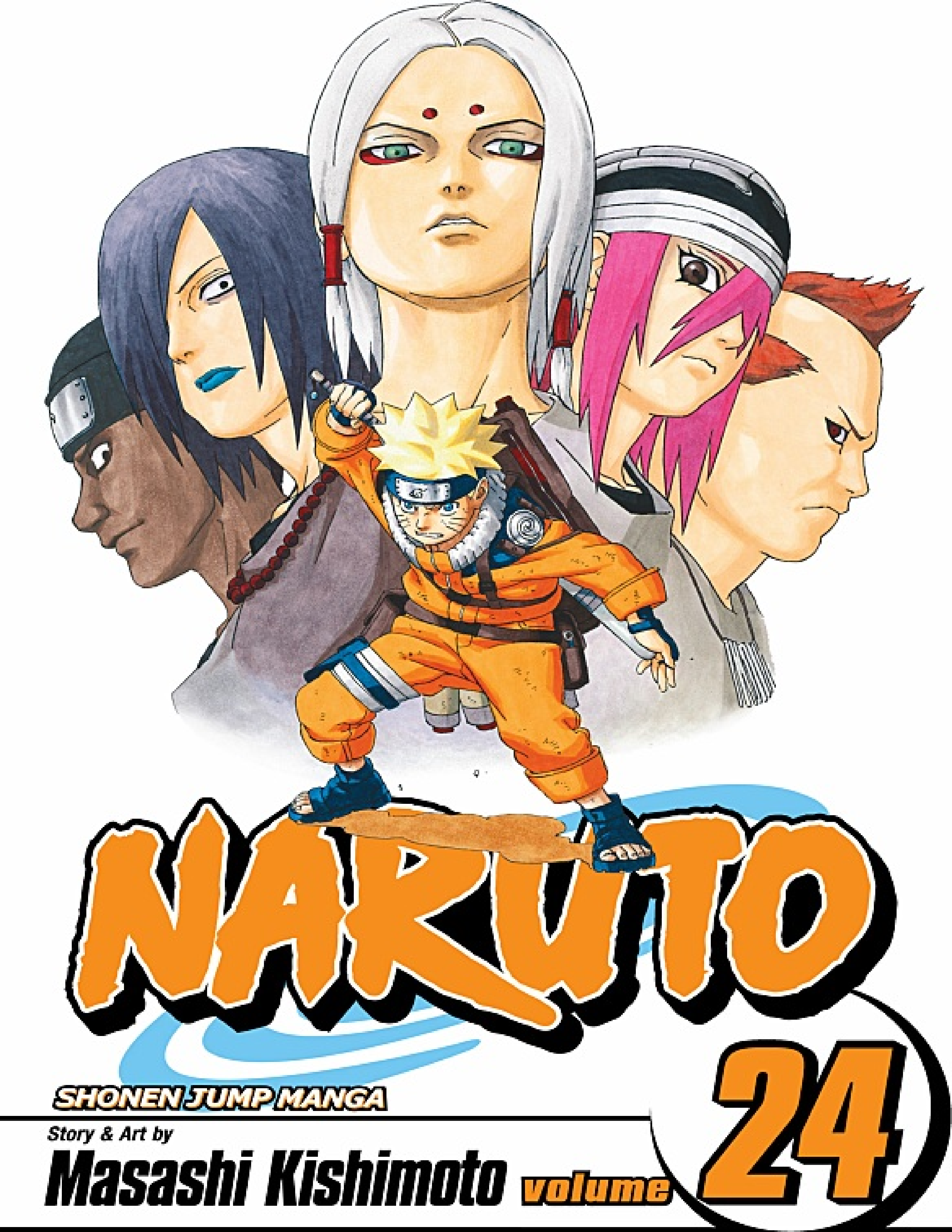
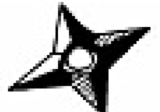

NARUTO
SHONEN JUMP MANGA
Story & Art by
Masashi Kishimoto
volume
24





岸本斉史

Naruto's already at volume 24! In volume 24 of *Dragon Ball**, Goku was about to fight Ginyu. It was so awesome, I was way too hyper reading it... I gotta make *Naruto* more exciting!!

—Masashi Kishimoto, 2004

(* Vol. 24 of *Dragon Ball* was released as Vol. 8 of *Dragon Ball Z* in the U.S. – Ed.)



Author/artist Masashi Kishimoto was born in 1974 in rural Okayama Prefecture, Japan. After spending time in art college, he won the Hop Step Award for new manga artists with his manga **Karakuri** (Mechanism). Kishimoto decided to base his next story on traditional Japanese culture. His first version of **Naruto**, drawn in 1997, was a one-shot story about fox spirits; his final version, which debuted in **Weekly Shonen Jump** in 1999, quickly became the most popular ninja manga in Japan.

NARUTO VOL. 24
The SHONEN JUMP Manga Edition

STORY AND ART BY MASASHI KISHIMOTO

Translation/Joe Yamazaki
English Adaptation/Naomi Kokubo & Eric-Jon Rössel Waugh
Letterer/Inori Fukuda Trant
Consultant/Mari Morimoto
Design/Yvonne Cai
Editor/Joel Enos

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Editor in Chief, Magazines/Marc Weidenbaum
VP of Publishing Licensing/Rika Inouye
VP of Sales/Gonzalo Ferreyra
Sr. VP of Marketing/Liza Coppola
Publisher/Hyoe Narita

Printed in the U.S.A.

Published by VIZ Media, LLC
P.O. Box 77010
San Francisco, CA 94107

SHONEN JUMP Manga Edition
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
First printing, November 2007
Second printing, November 2007

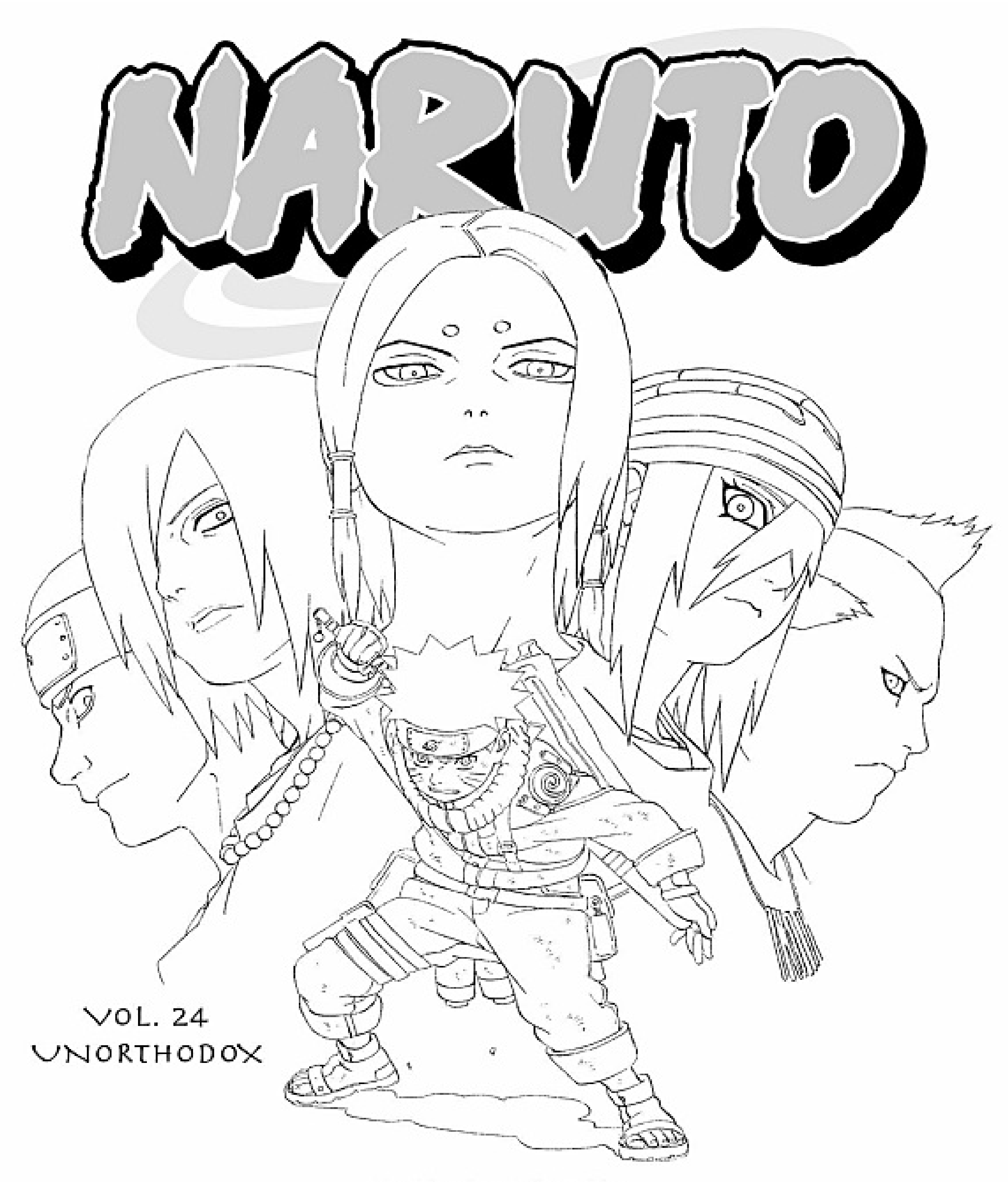




PARENTAL ADVISORY
NARUTO is rated T for Teen and is recommended for ages 13 and up. This volume contains realistic and fantasy violence.
ratings.viz.com



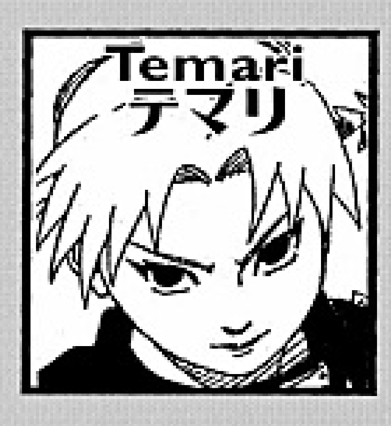
SHONEN JUMP MANGA EDITION



VOL. 24
UNORTHODOX

STORY AND ART BY
MASASHI KISHIMOTO











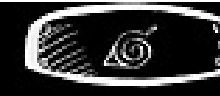


The Story So Far...

Naruto was once the bane of the Konohagakure Ninja Academy. Despite the rough start, he and his friends Sasuke and Sakura successfully join the ranks of the ninja. But during the final tournament of the Third Chunin Exam, the nefarious Orochimaru launches *Operation Destroy Konoha*, during which the Third Hokage sacrifices his own life.

In the aftermath, Tsunade steps up to become the Fifth Hokage. Charmed by the power of Orochimaru, Sasuke joins up with the Sound Ninja Four. During a battle with the Sound Four, Choji and Neji both fall, but Naruto, Shikamaru and Kiba are still standing…


CHARACTERS
Sasuke
サスケ
Naruto
ナルト
Sakura
サクラ
Shikamaru
シカマル
Choji
チョウジ
Kiba & Akamaru
キバ&赤丸
Neji ネジ
Rock Lee
ロック・リー
The Sound Ninja Four
音の四人衆
Sakon
左近
Ukon
右近
Jirobo
次郎坊
Tayuya
多由也
Kidomaru
鬼童丸

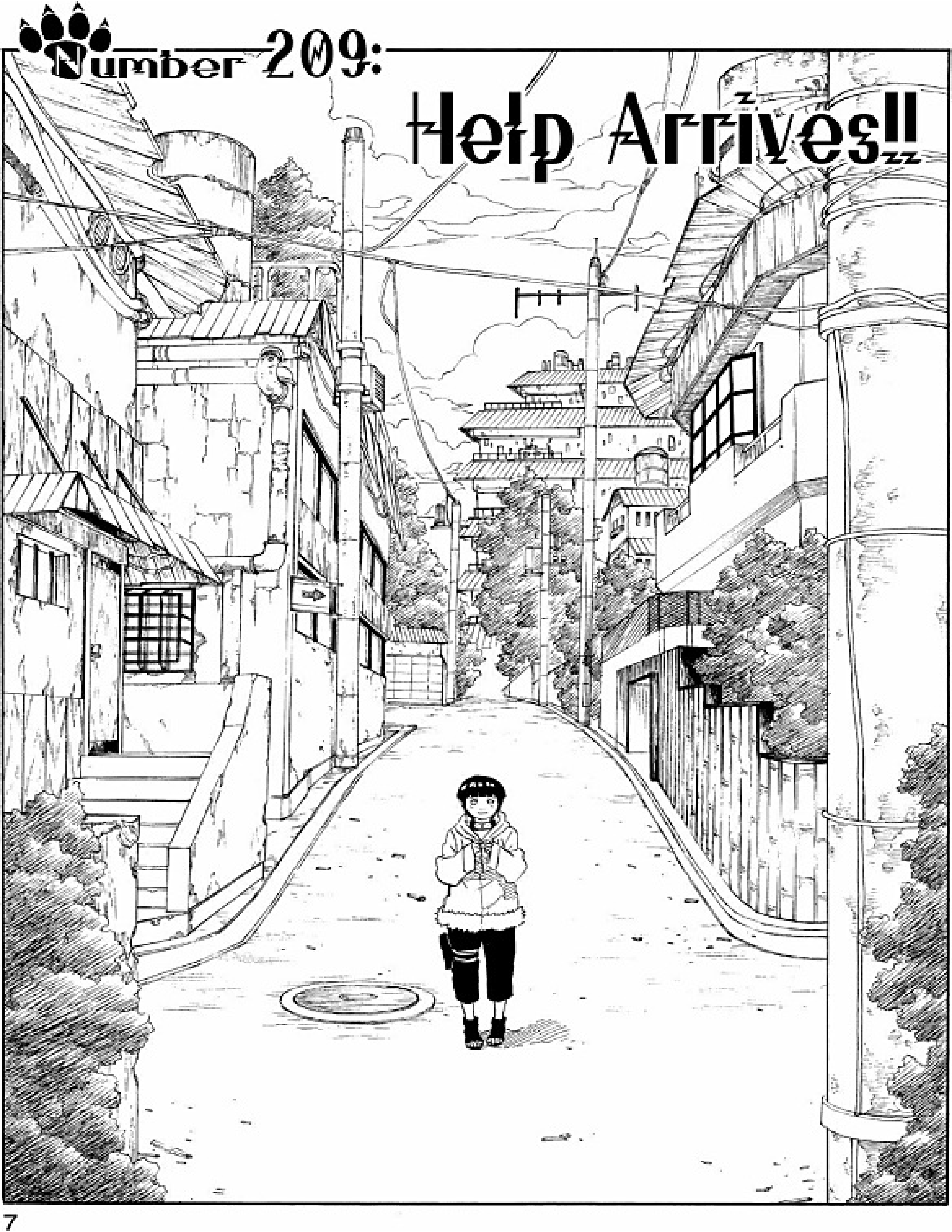


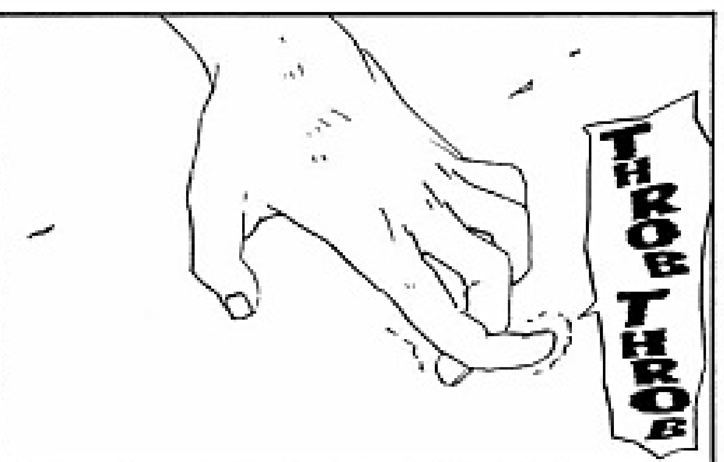
NARUTO

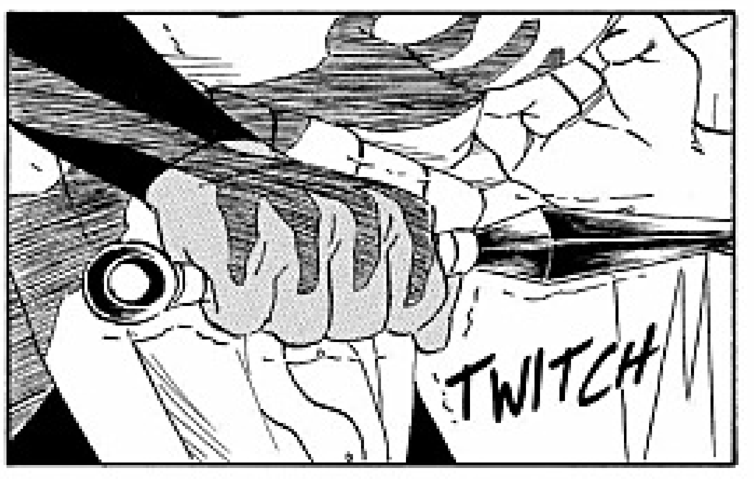
VOL. 24
UNORTHODOX

CONTENTS




Number 209:
Help Arrives!!


THROB THROB


TWITCH


HMPH... I GOTTA GIVE IT TO YOU...
YOU MAY BE STUPID... BUT YOU'RE BRAVE.


READ
THIS
WAY

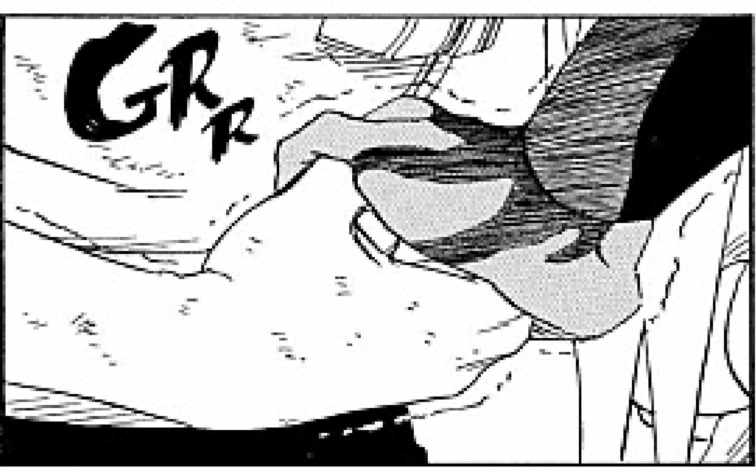

...


AND I'M SUCH A NICE GUY.


SEE, IT'S AGAINST MY CODE TO STRIKE A LADY.
THEN AGAIN, DO YOU REALLY FIT THE DEFINITION...? NAH, GUESS NOT.
SHF


WSSH

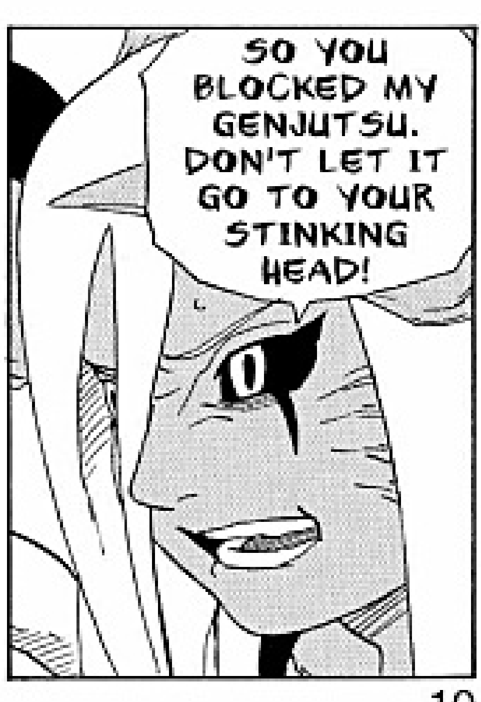
BAM


GRR


!!


SKRT
BUT I AM NOT LOSING THIS...
RRG


NUTS...
I CAN'T SUBDUE HER COMPLETELY. NOT JUST YET.

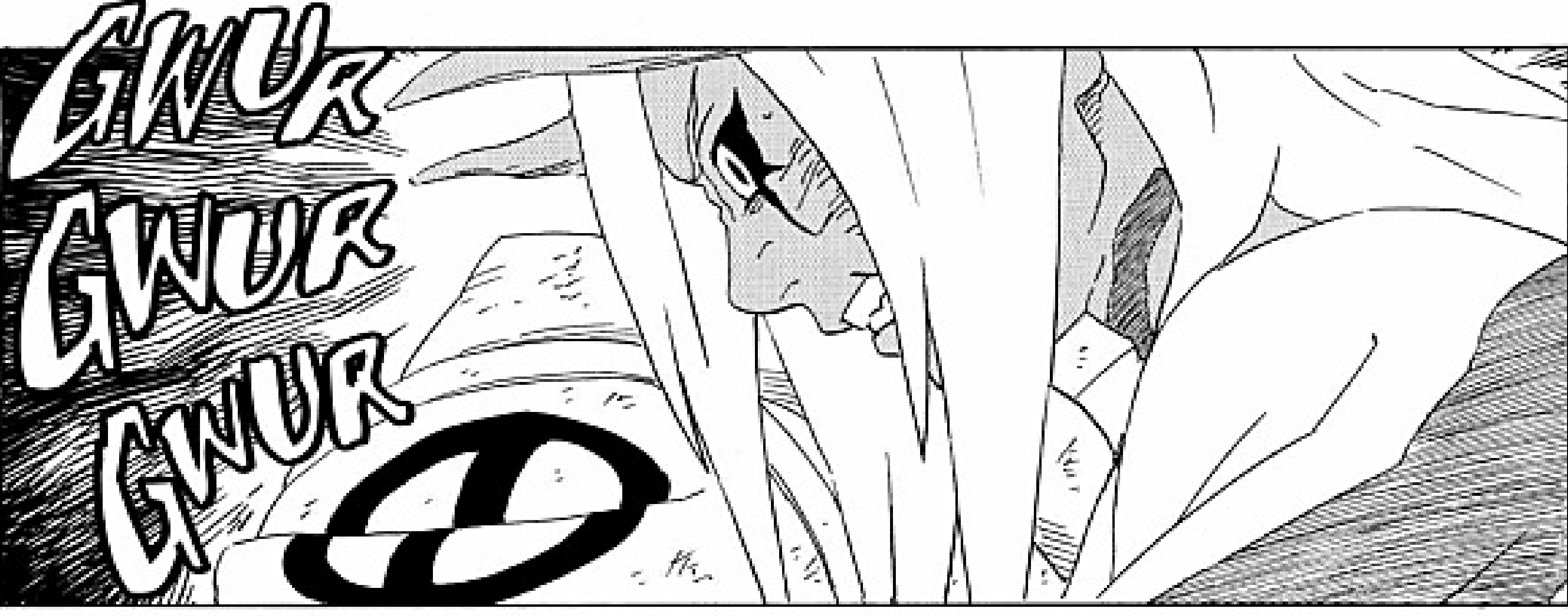

SO YOU BLOCKED MY GENJUTSU. DON'T LET IT GO TO YOUR STINKING HEAD!


READ
THIS
WAY


SKUNNG

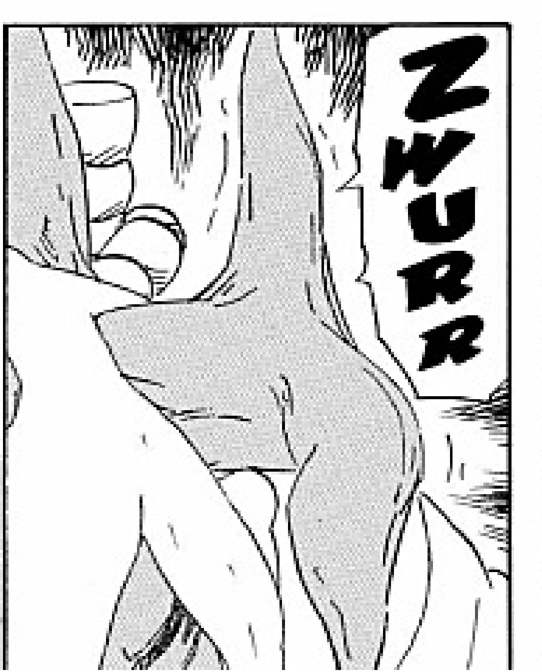

...!
UGH
...
GRR


ALMOST THERE...

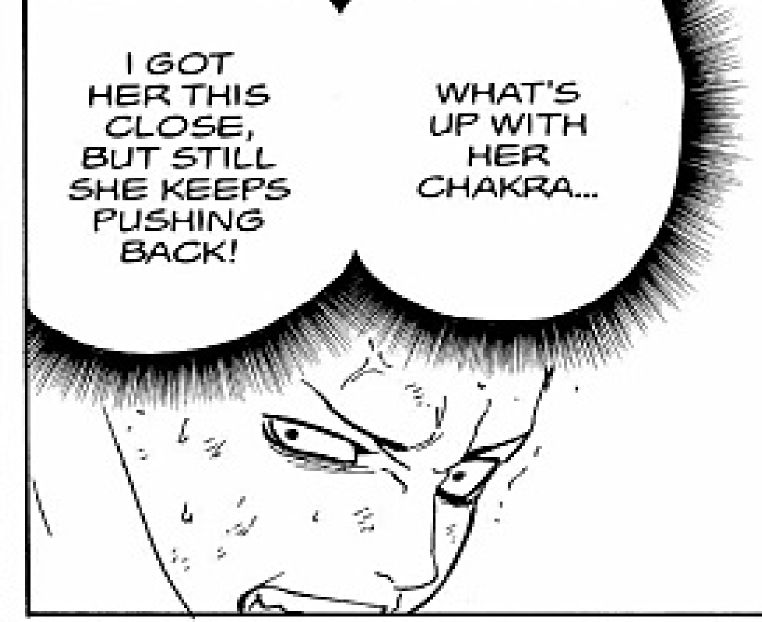

GWUR
GWUR
GWUR
GWUR


?!

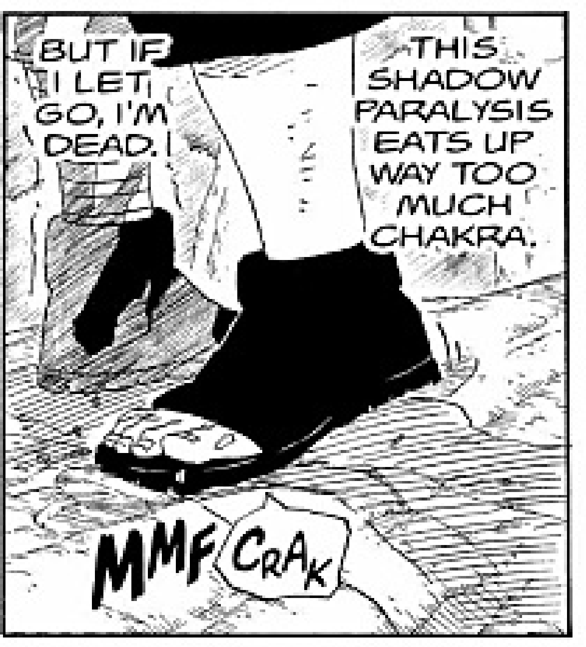

ZWUR


ZWURR

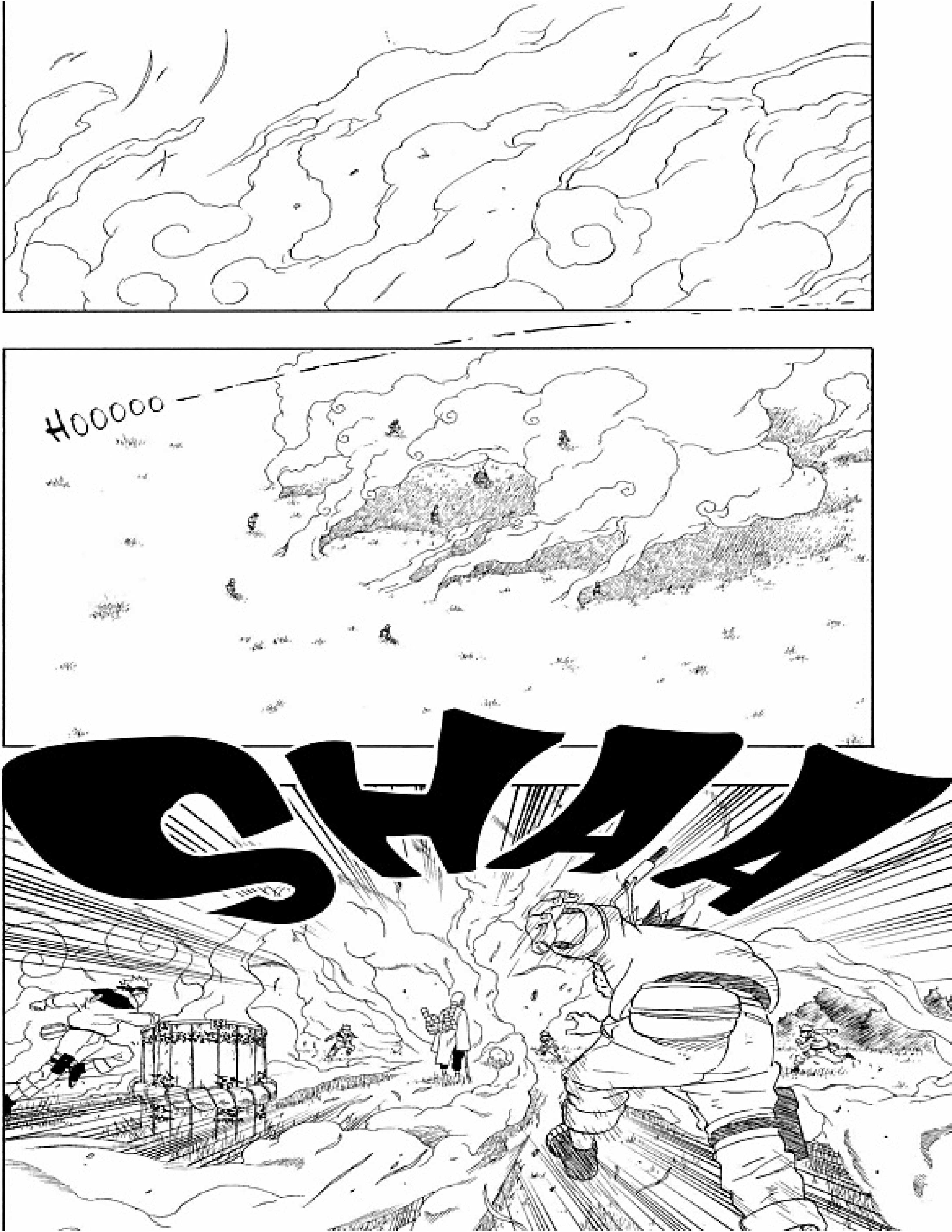

ZWUR
ZWURR

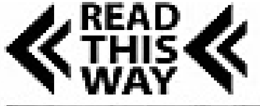

WHAT'S UP WITH HER CHAKRA...
I GOT HER THIS CLOSE, BUT STILL SHE KEEPS PUSHING BACK!


...

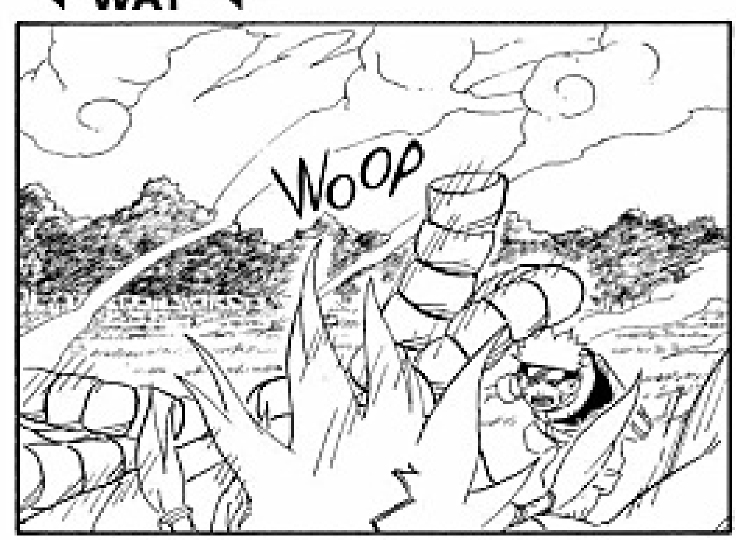

THIS SHADOW PARALYSIS EATS UP WAY TOO MUCH CHAKRA.
BUT IF I LET GO, I'M DEAD.
MMF
CRAK


I'VE GOTTA FINISH HER OFF.
GRR... RRUH...
NNP
URK...


HOOOOO
SHAA







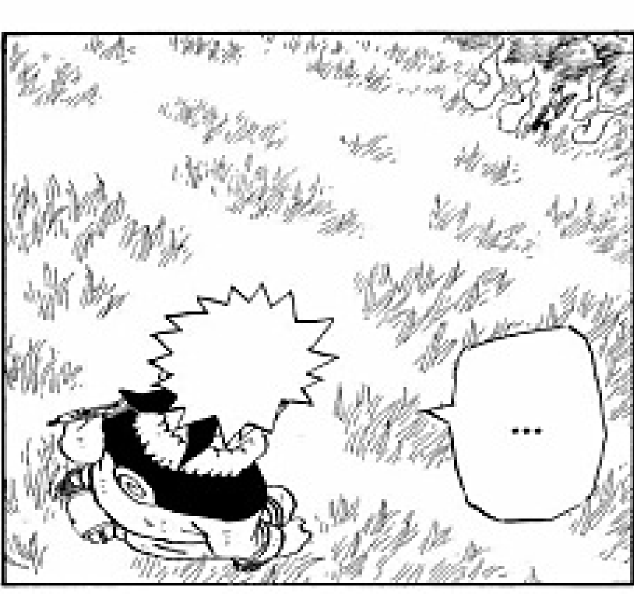
WHOA!!!

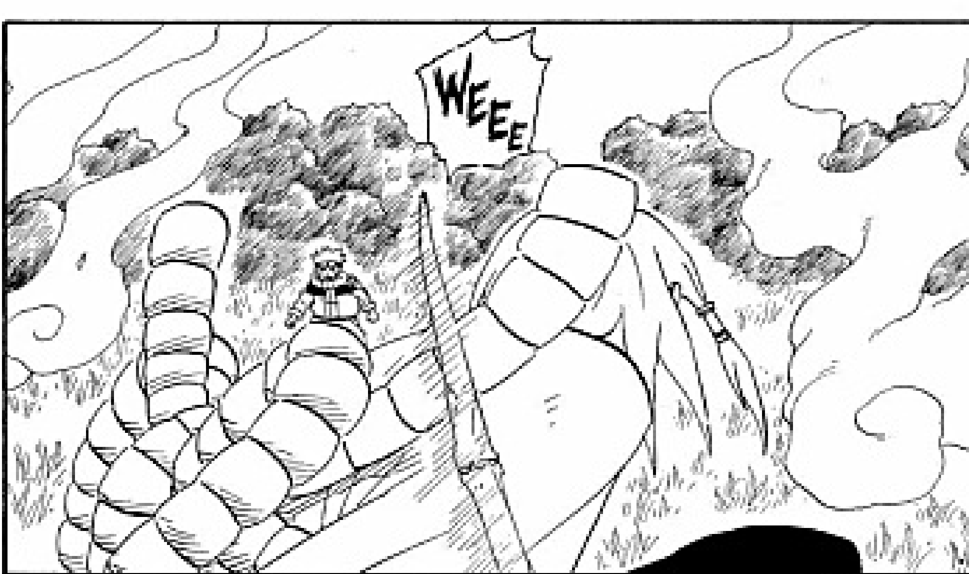


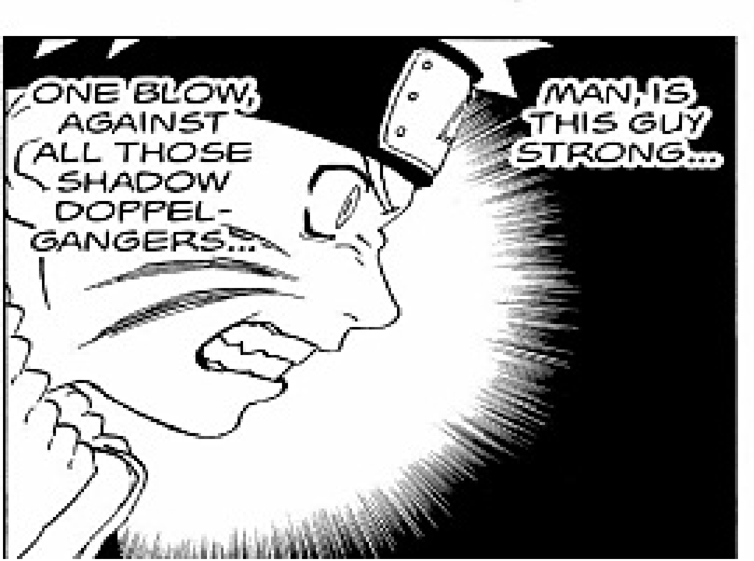




POOF
POOF
POOF
POOF



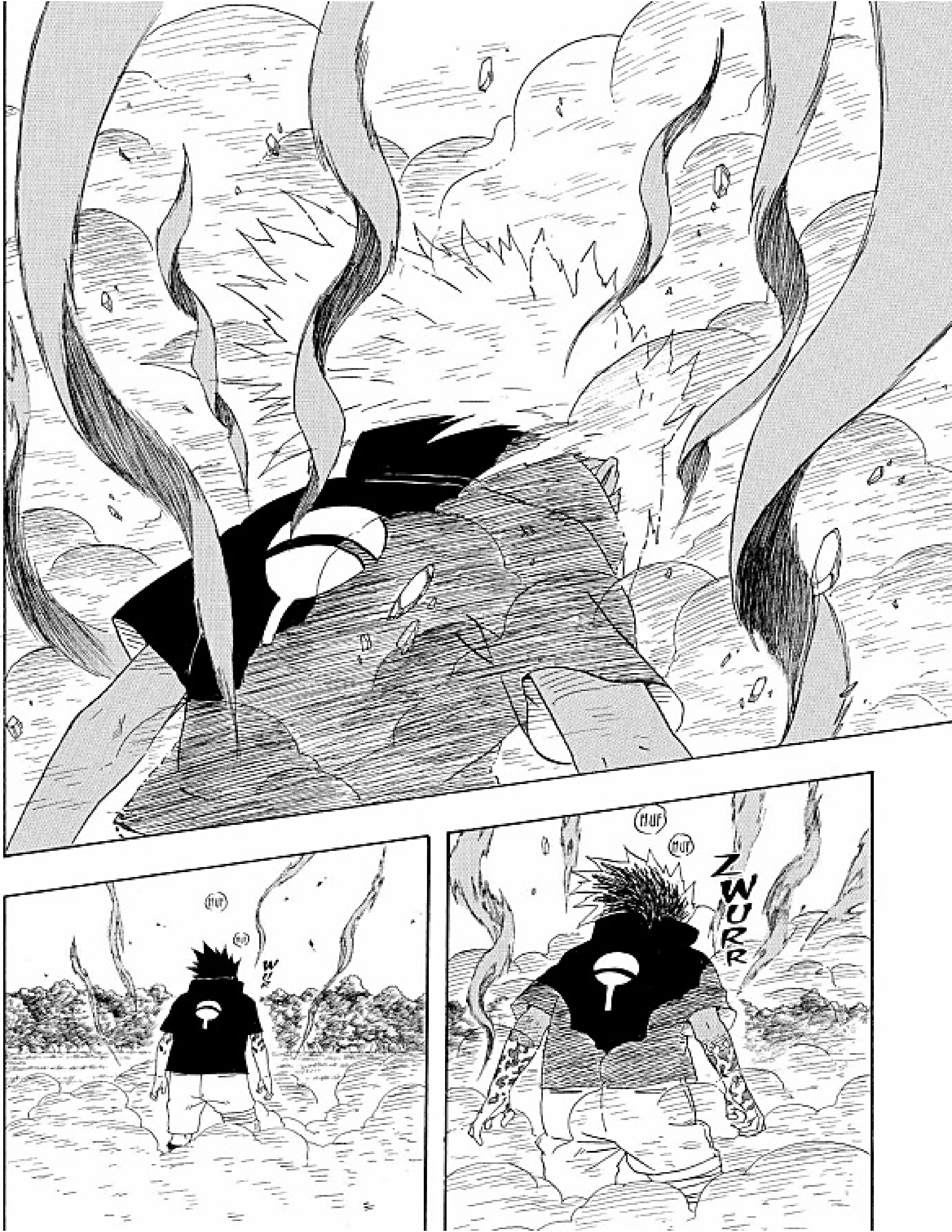








SSSSSS
WE'VE WAITED TOO LONG... BUT THE TIME IS NIGH.
THIS IS OUR FIRST STEP TOWARD... LORD OROCHIMARU'S DESIGN.
...!!
SHRIP
BOMF


HUF
HUF
ZWURR

...?!

...

SASUKE...

...

SASUKE! WHAT ARE YOU DOIN' HERE?!

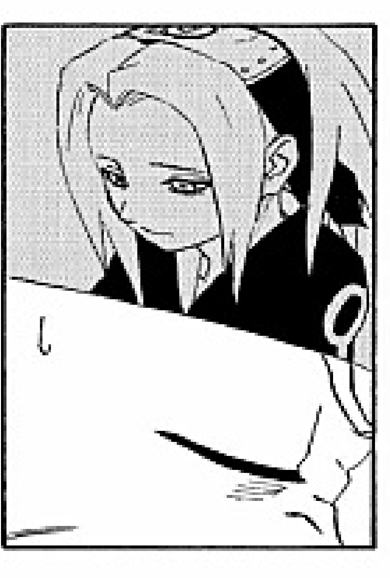
COME ON! LET'S GO!

HEH... HEH HEH...

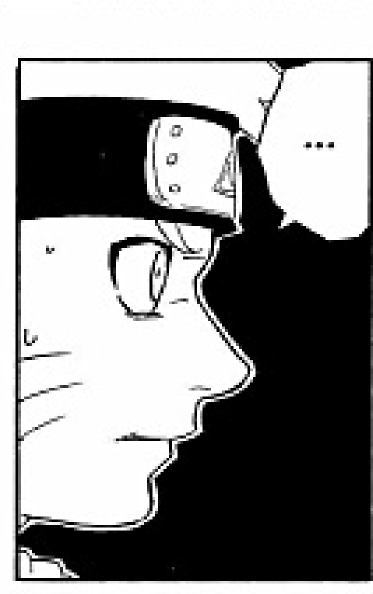
?!

HEH...

HEH HEH...







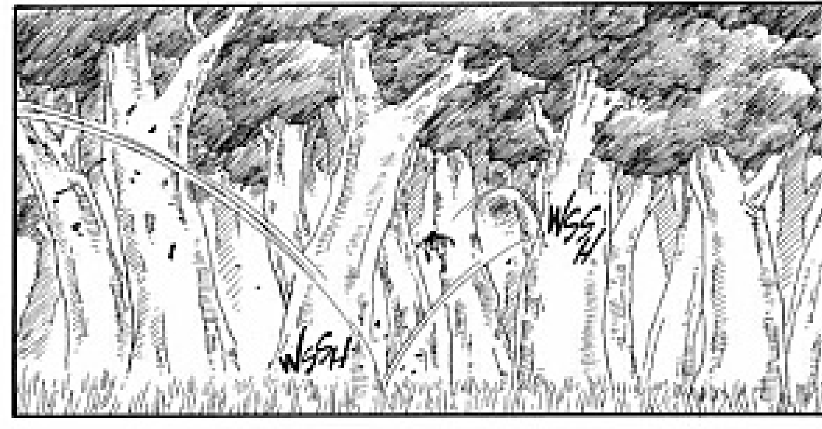


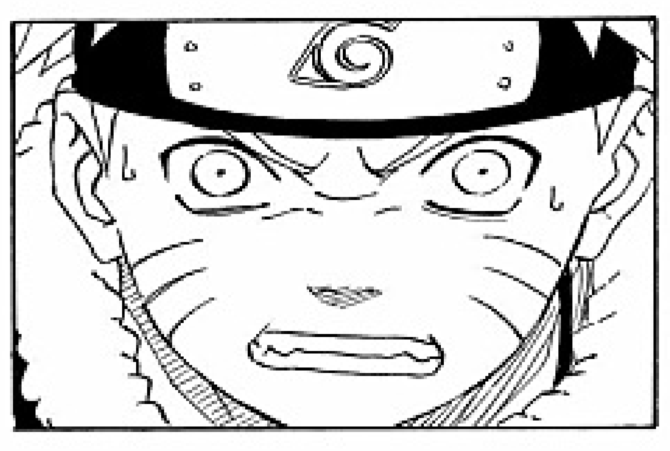



READ
THIS
WAY


FSSH

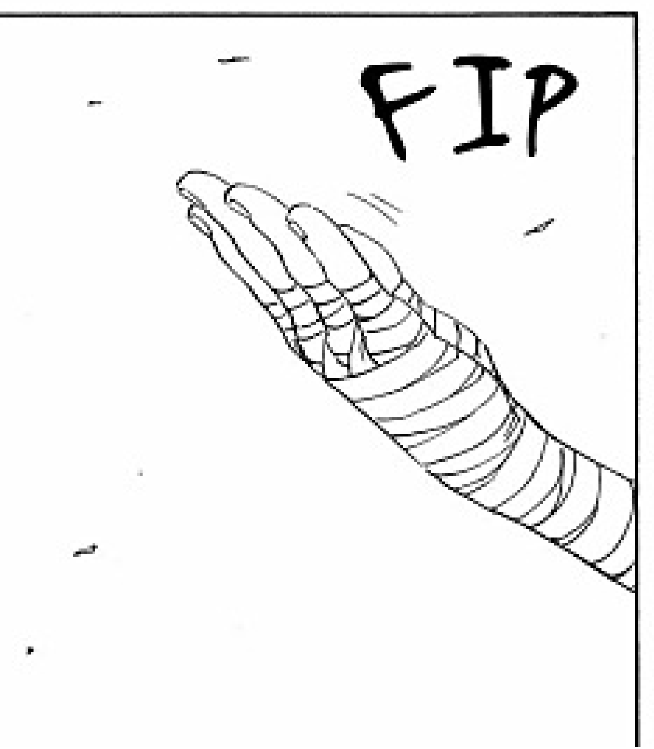

SASUKE! WAIT!!


WSSH
WSSH




FORGET IT...
WSST
JOLT
?!


...IN DEATH.


FIP

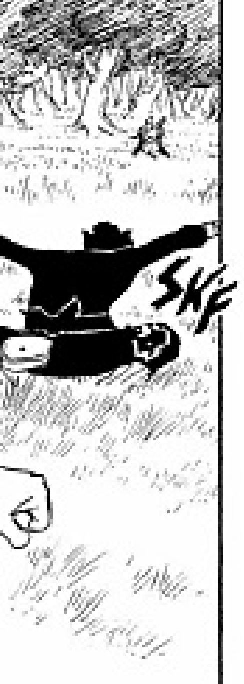

WHO...?



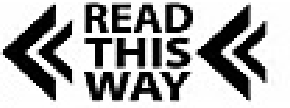
KONOHA SENPÛ!
KONOHA HURRICANE!!!





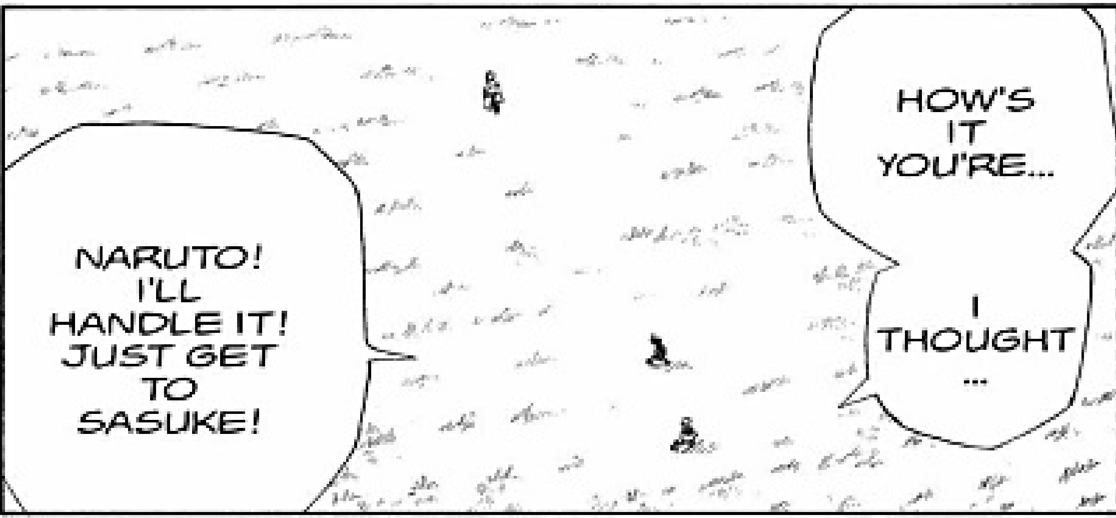



THE NAME'S ROCK LEE!
KONOHA'S HANDSOME BLUE BEAST IS BACK...


READ THIS WAY


...


BUSHY BROWS ...!

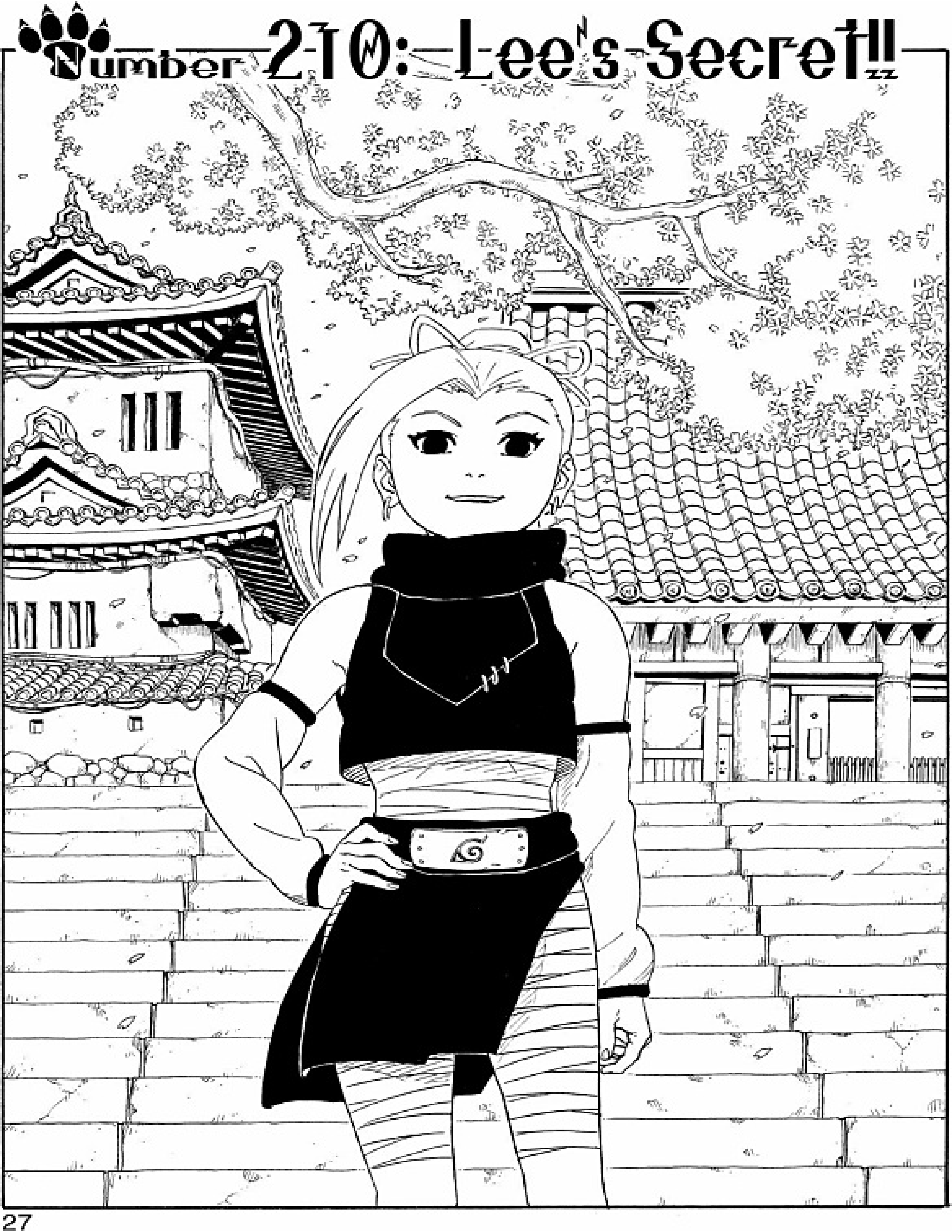

HOW'S IT YOU'RE...
I THOUGHT...
NARUTO! I'LL HANDLE IT! JUST GET TO SASUKE!


KWAH-
!!


LEAVE THIS GUY TO ME!


HE'S...
NOT AS EASY AS THE OTHERS.

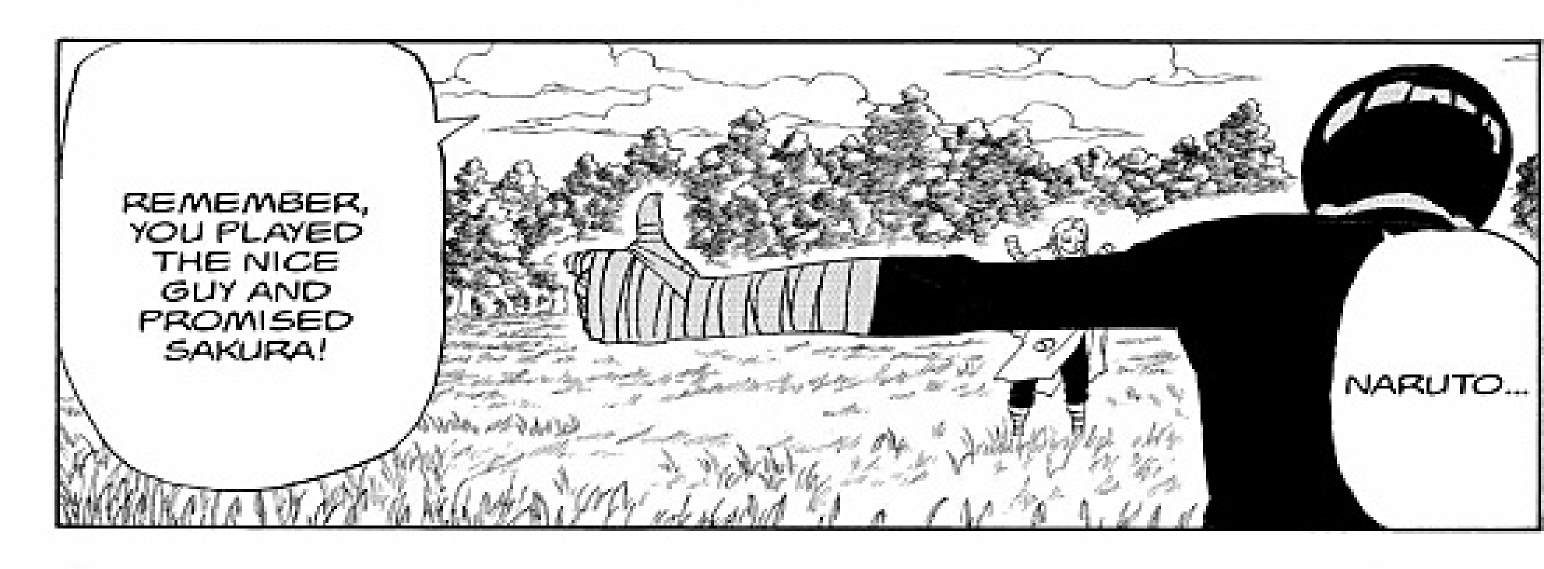

NARUTO
TM


Number 210: Lee's Secret!!


HOOOOO
CAREFUL, BUSHY BROW!
HE USES HIS BONES TO ATTACK.
BONES...?
SHIIING


!
WIP
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! GO! NOW!!

HE'S SUPER STRONG.

...

REMEMBER, YOU PLAYED THE NICE GUY AND PROMISED SAKURA!
NARUTO...

THAT'S MY PROMISE OF A LIFE-TIME!!
IT'S OKAY. I'LL BRING BACK SASUKE FOR SURE!

...

I'LL BEAT THIS GUY!

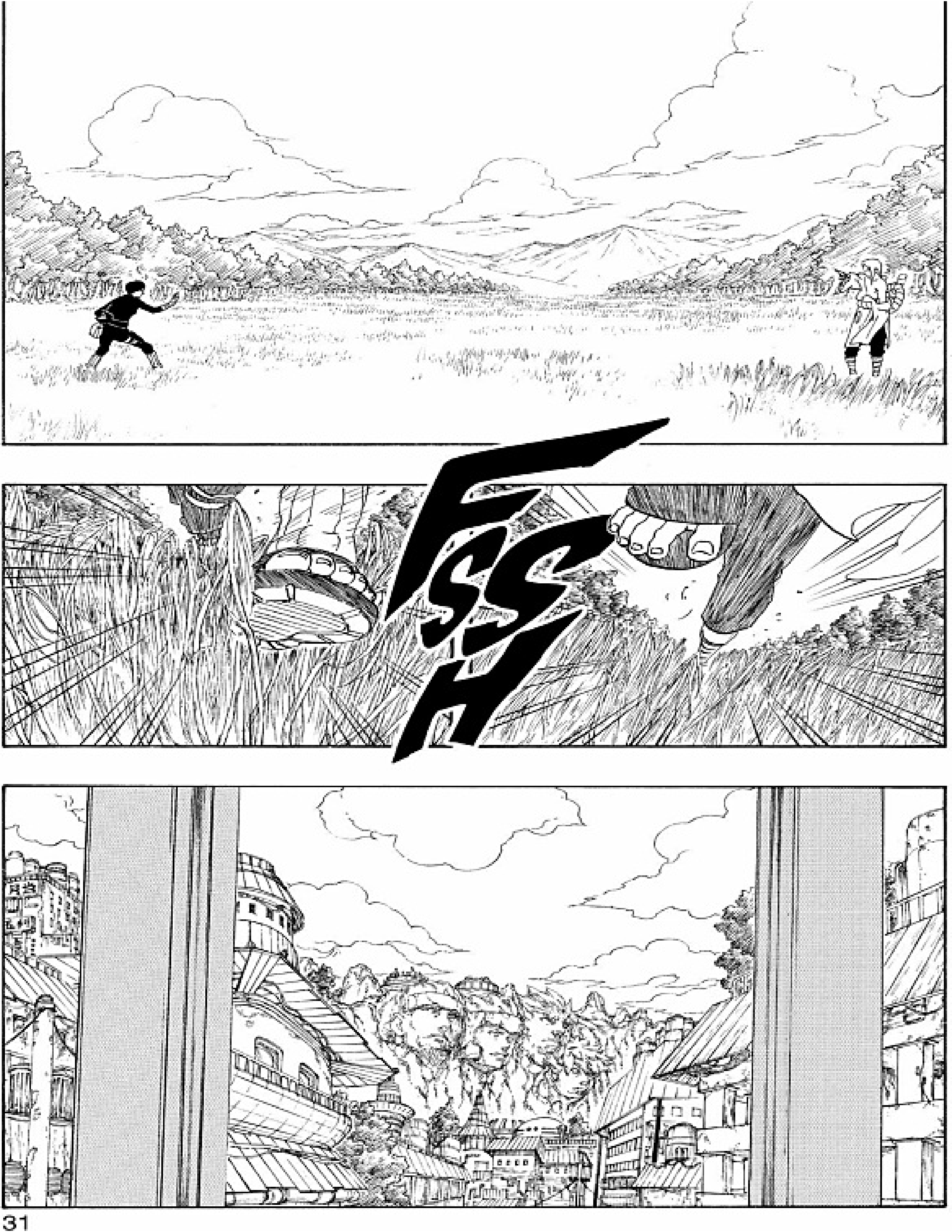
WUP

THAT'S MY PROMISE!!

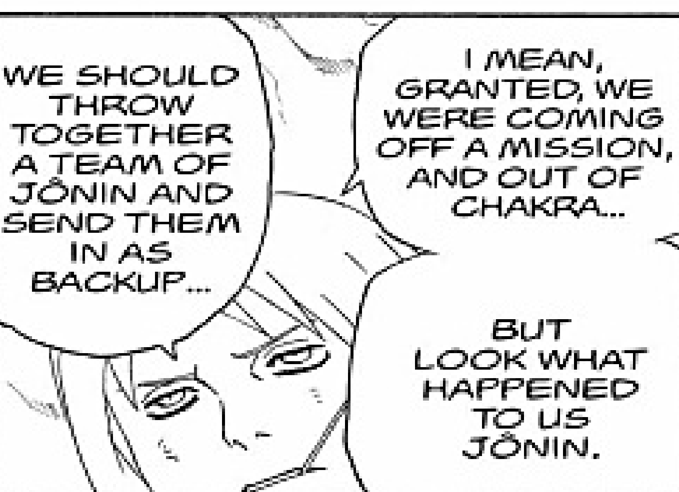
...

...




FSSH

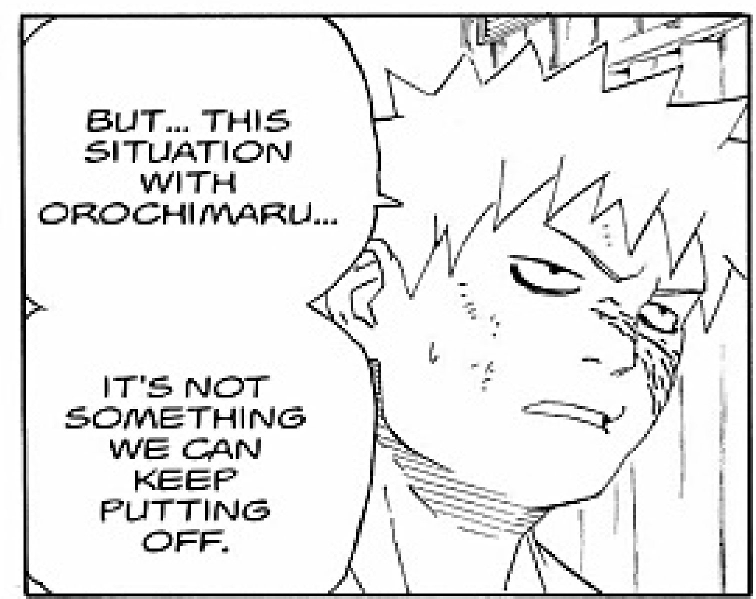

BUT MAN... IF IT WAS SASUKE INSIDE THAT CASKET...
AGAINST FOES LIKE THAT... A HANDFUL OF GENIN WON'T DO.

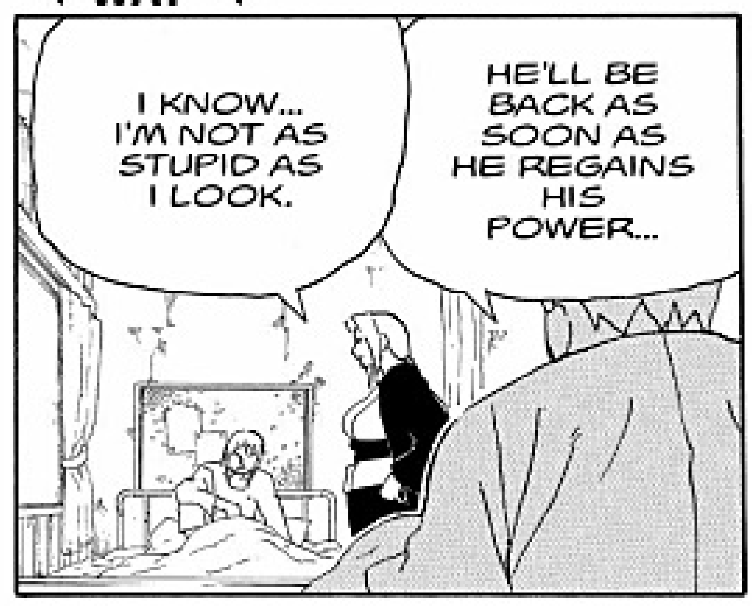

I MEAN, GRANTED, WE WERE COMING OFF A MISSION, AND OUT OF CHAKRA...
BUT LOOK WHAT HAPPENED TO US JÔNIN.
WE SHOULD THROW TOGETHER A TEAM OF JÔNIN AND SEND THEM IN AS BACKUP...

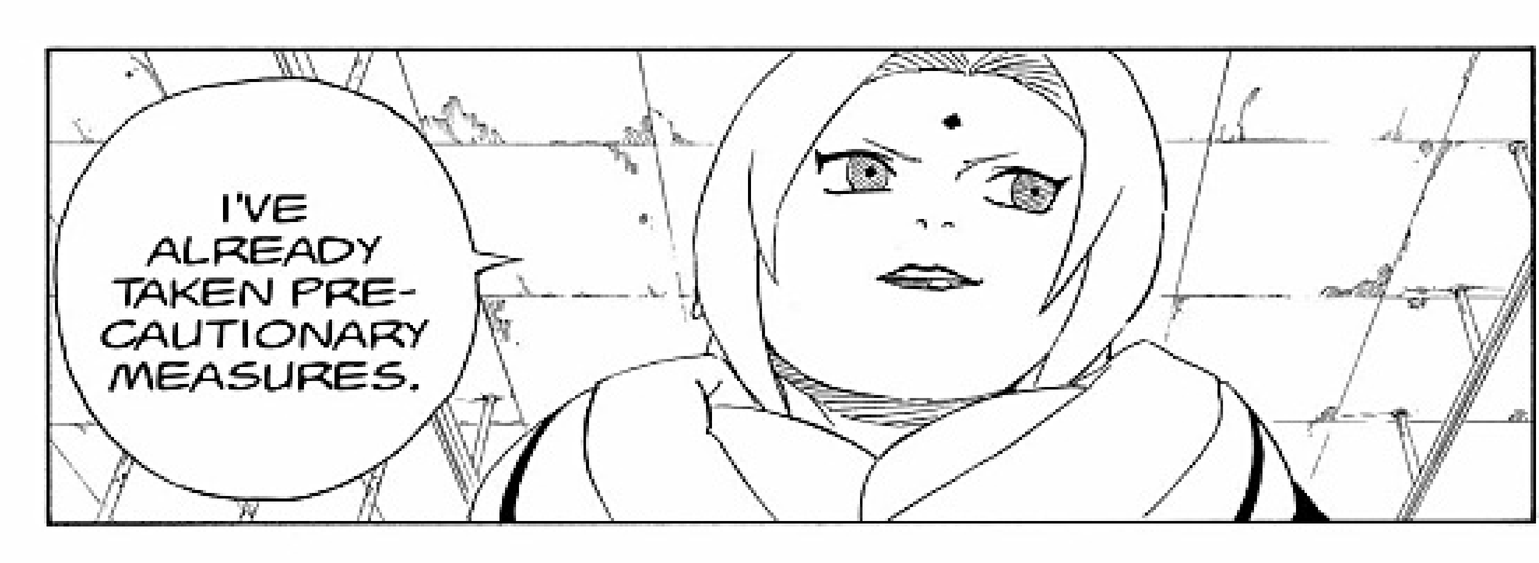

WE CAN'T DO THAT...
AFTER OROCHIMARU'S ATTACK, KONOHA HAS LOST ITS MANDATE AS A PRINCIPAL TERRITORY.
YOU KNOW THE SITUATION. ALL OUR JÔNIN AND CHÛNIN ARE BEING MOBILIZED TO NIP POTENTIAL DANGERS IN THE BUD AT HOME AND ABROAD...


EVEN IF THE SHARINGAN WERE TO FALL INTO OROCHIMARU'S HANDS...
RIGHT NOW OUR PRIORITY IS AVOIDING WAR WITH THE OTHER NATIONS.

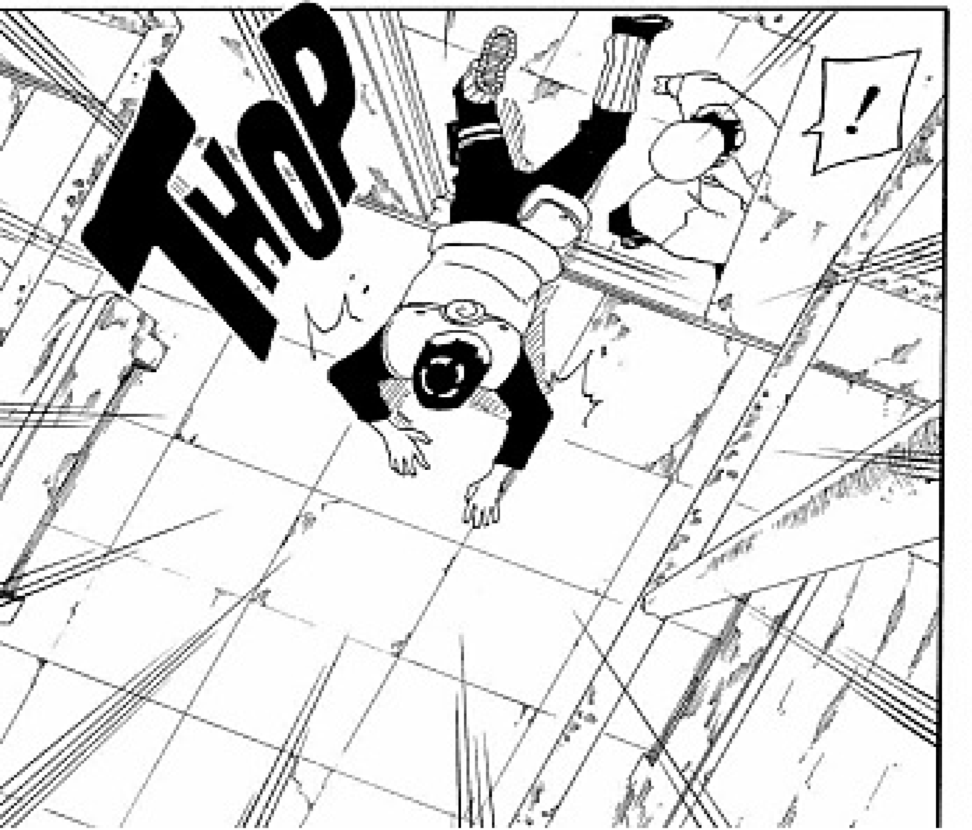

READ THIS WAY


BUT... THIS SITUATION WITH OROCHIMARU...
IT'S NOT SOMETHING WE CAN KEEP PUTTING OFF.


HE'LL BE BACK AS SOON AS HE REGAINS HIS POWER...
I KNOW... I'M NOT AS STUPID AS I LOOK.


I'VE ALREADY TAKEN PRE-CAUTIONARY MEASURES.


FWIW
HUF
THIS WAY.
HUF
SHK


!
THOP

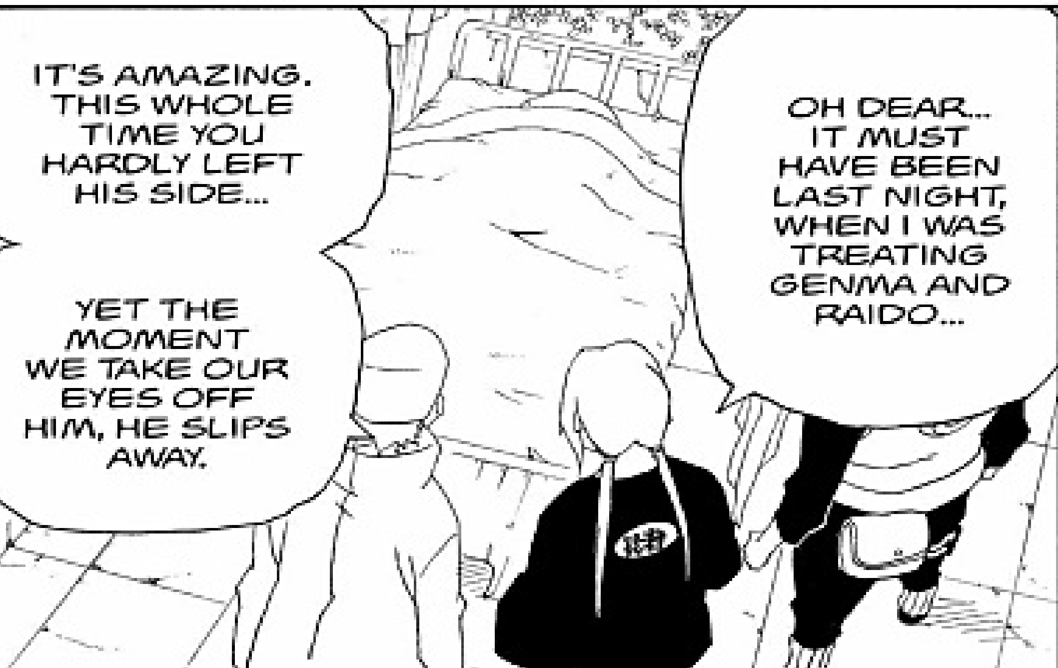

GUY?! WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?
DID YOU SUCCEED?!
SHK
NO, I... I TOOK CARE OF IT, AND... RAN STRAIGHT BACK... IT WAS ALL I COULD DO!!
HUF
HUF
HUF
BUT NEVER MIND THAT!!
WHAT ABOUT LEE?! HOW IS HE?!! TELL ME!!
PAT
HIS SURGERY WAS A SUCCESS.
IF HE'S LIMITED TO JUTSU TRAINING, HE CAN START AS EARLY AS TOMORROW.
BUT IT WOULDN'T HURT TO TAKE IT EASY FOR A WHILE.


LADY TSUNADE!! WE'VE GOT A PROBLEM BACK HERE!! ROCK LEE IS MISSING!!

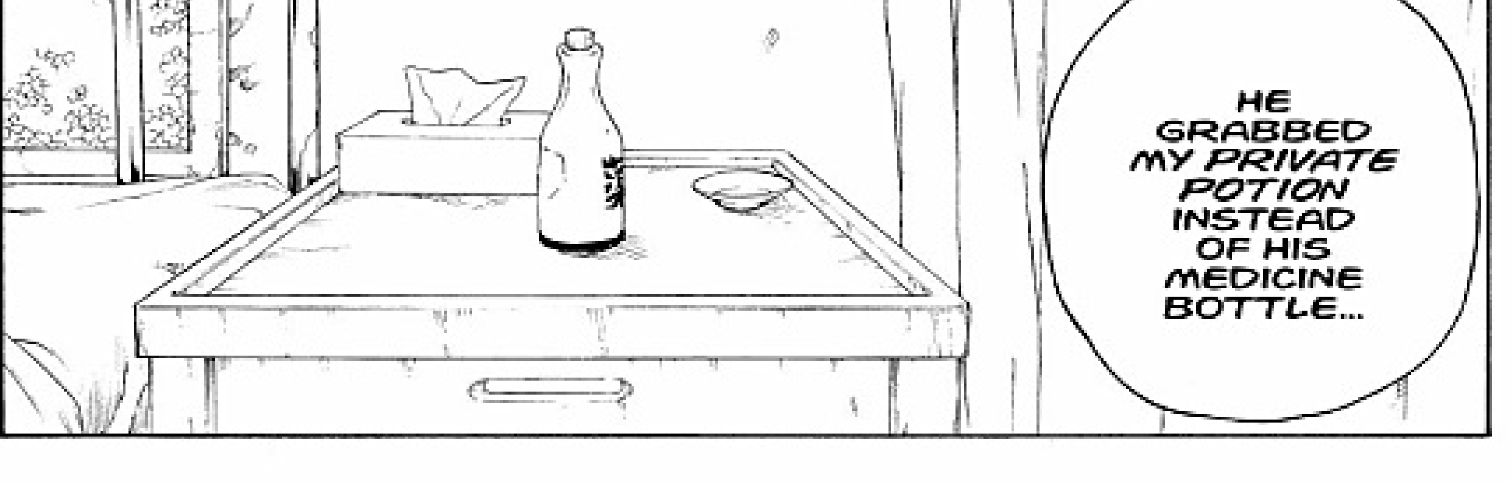

TAK
TAK




LEE...
...

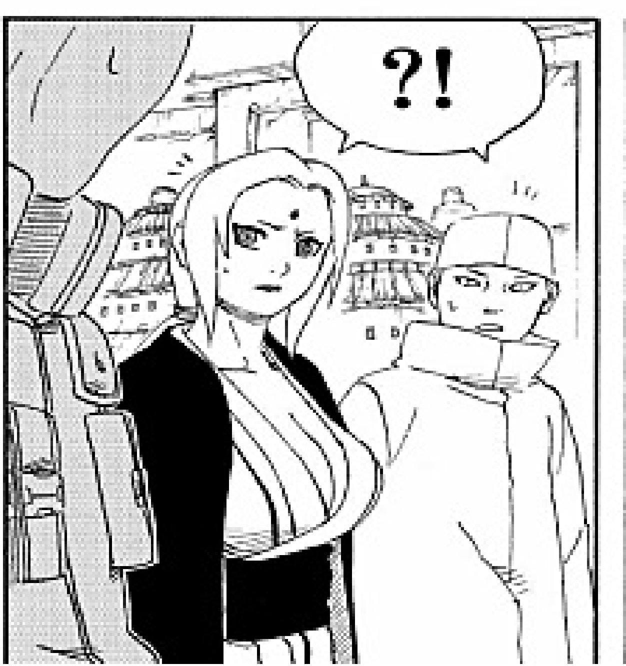

IT'S AMAZING. THIS WHOLE TIME YOU HARDLY LEFT HIS SIDE...
YET THE MOMENT WE TAKE OUR EYES OFF HIM, HE SLIPS AWAY.
OH DEAR... IT MUST HAVE BEEN LAST NIGHT, WHEN I WAS TREATING GENMA AND RAIDO...

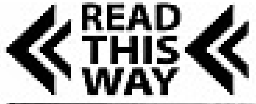
THAT FOOL...
HE'S GONE CHASING OFF AFTER THEM.
HAH...
SEE WHAT KIND OF A HURRY HE WAS IN...



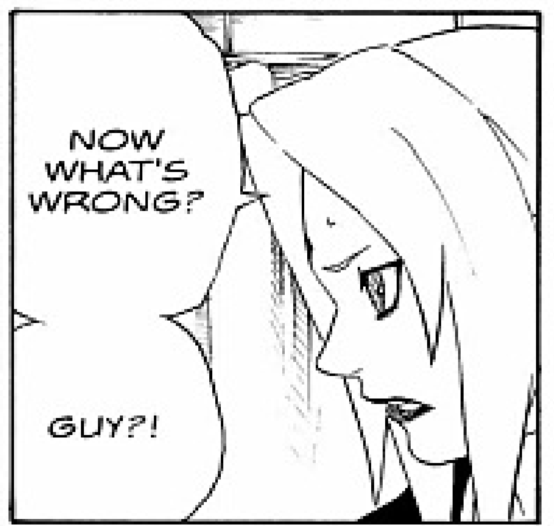








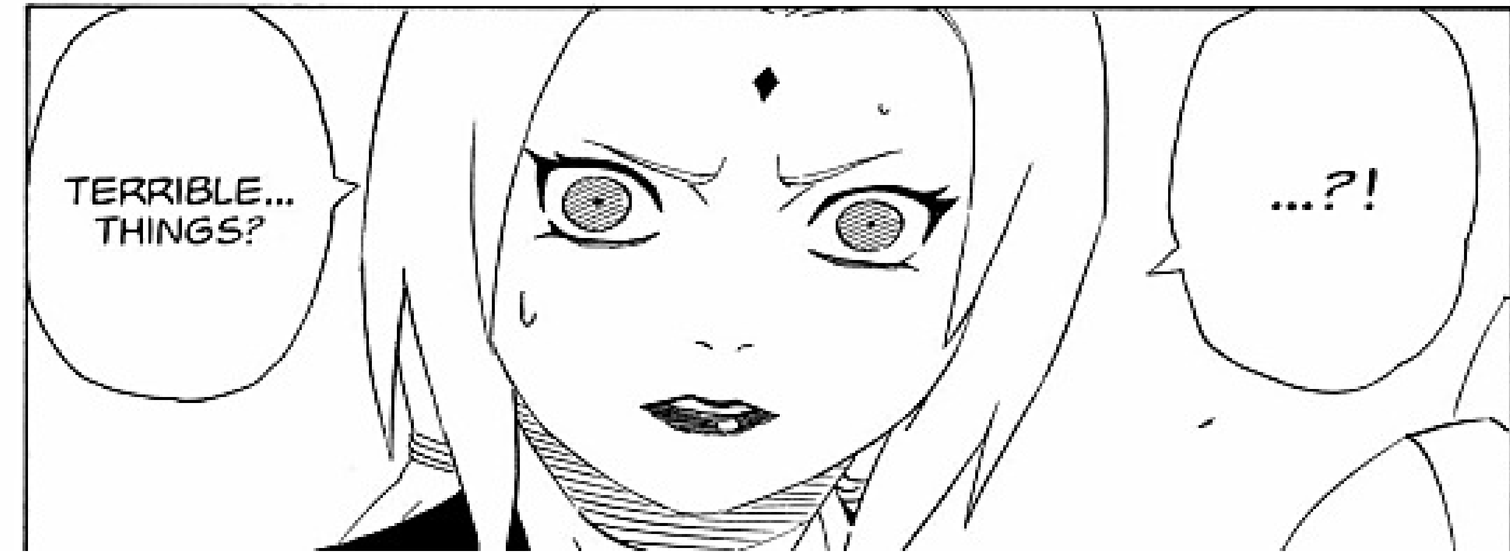






IF HE DRINKS EVEN ONE DROP OF YOUR PRIVATE POTION...

...TERRIBLE THINGS WILL HAPPEN!




KONOHA DAISENPÛ! KONOHA GREAT HURRICANE!!
WUP
WUP

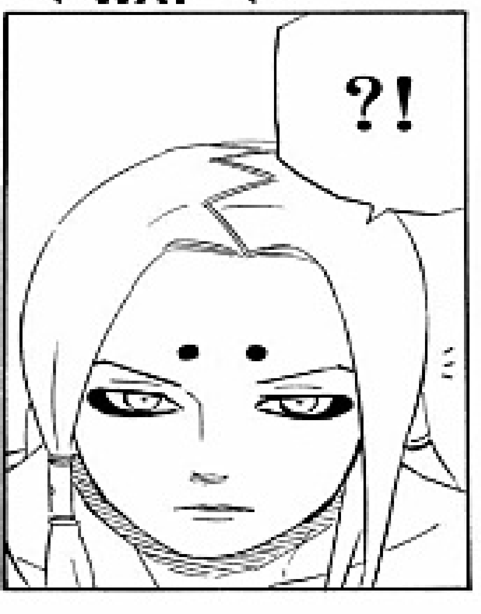

FSSH
FWOOM
WIP
SKFF



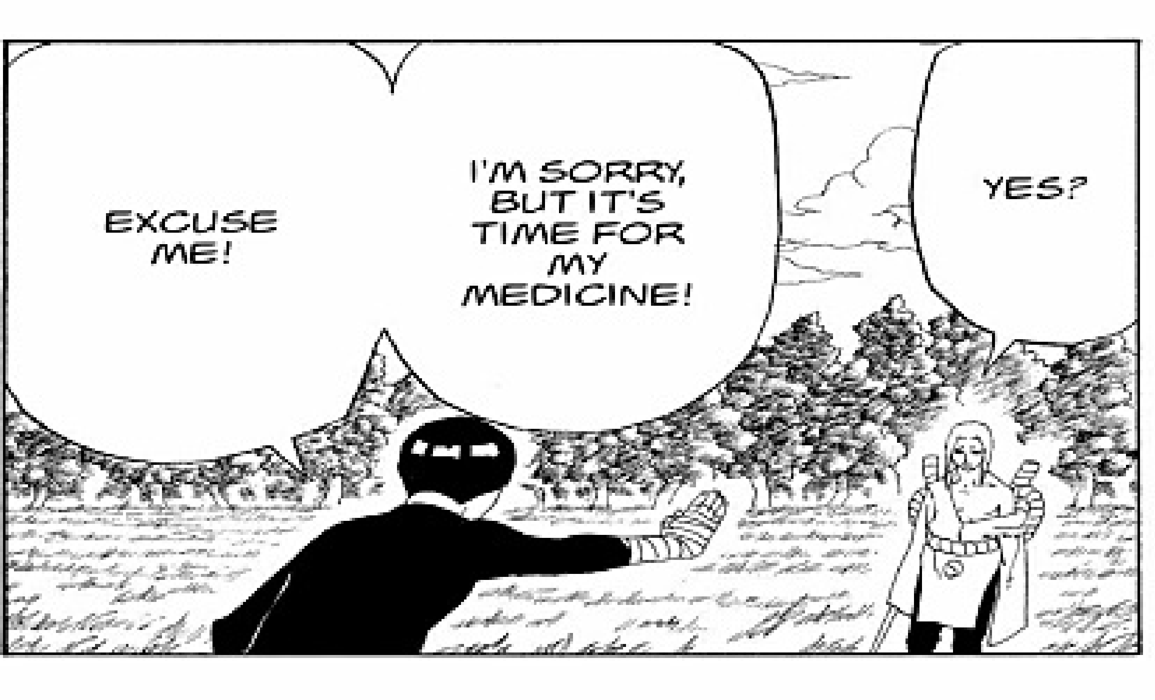
WSST
IT'S AMAZING... I CAN'T LAND A SINGLE KICK...
YOUR AGILITY SURPRISES ME... AND YOUR STYLE IS SINGULAR...
SHHK
READY?
SHF
YOUR MANNER IS FAR TOO... DIRECT.

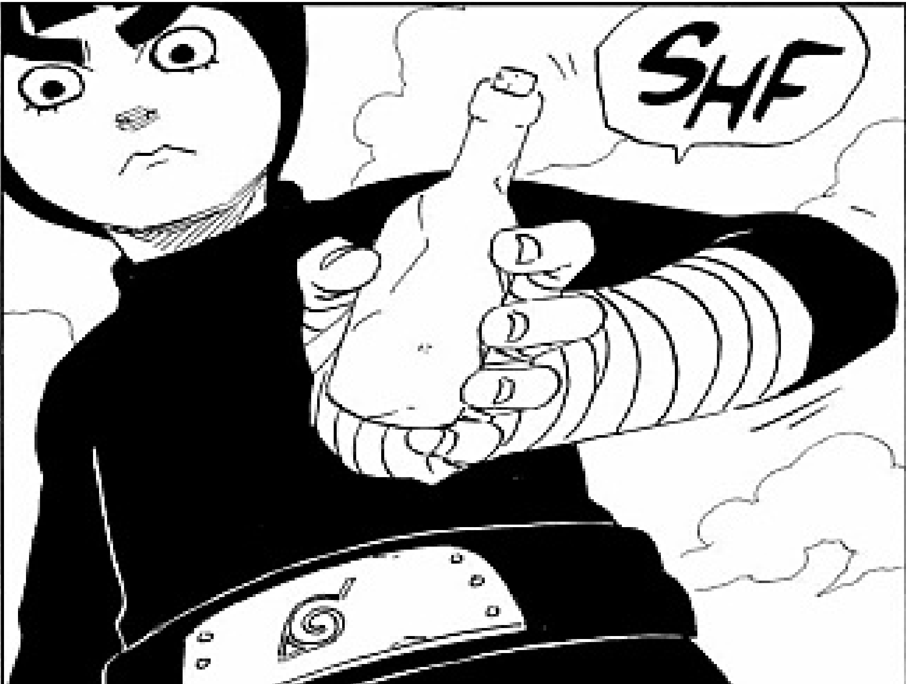

READ THIS WAY


ONE MOMENT, PLEASE!!
WID


?!


SHUF SHUF


YES?
I'M SORRY, BUT IT'S TIME FOR MY MEDICINE!
EXCUSE ME!


SHF

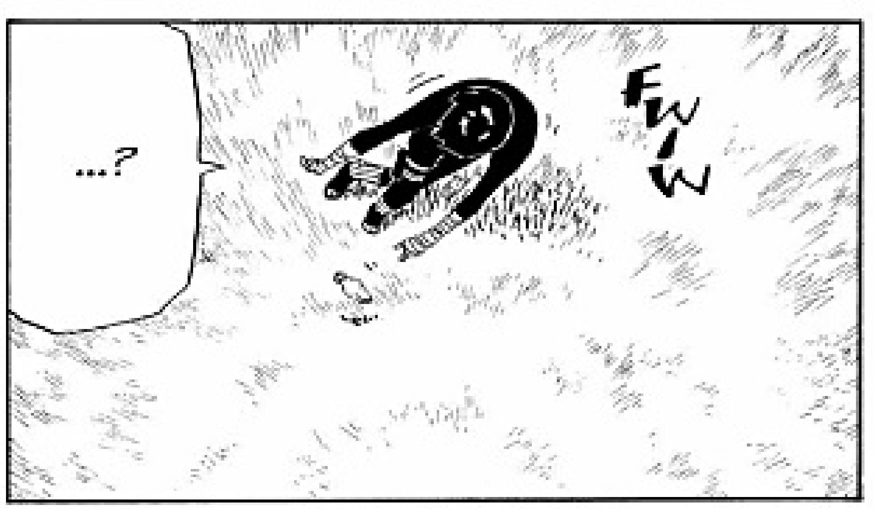

I'VE NEVER BEEN MUCH OF ONE FOR MEDICINE, BUT...
SPOP


NGUP


...

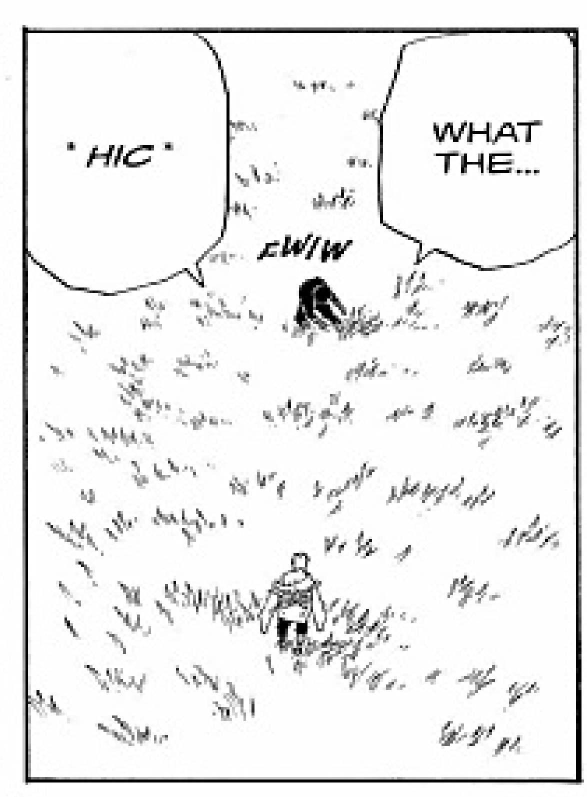

GULP


BLEH...
THIS IS THE WORST ONE YET....


...?
FWIW


?!


READ THIS WAY


WHAT THE...
FWIW
HIC


YOU SEE... BACK WHEN LEE ACHIEVED THE REVERSE LOTUS, I BROUGHT HIM TO A RESTAURANT TO CELEBRATE.
AT ONE POINT, TAKING IT FOR WATER, LEE ACCIDENTALLY DOWNED A CUP OF *SOMEONE ELSE'S PRIVATE POTION*. AND THEN... THINGS GOT OUT OF HAND.
OUT OF HAND, YOU SAY?


WHEN HE CAME TO...


FWIW
THE PLACE WAS A DISASTER...


A DISAS-TER?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
FWIW

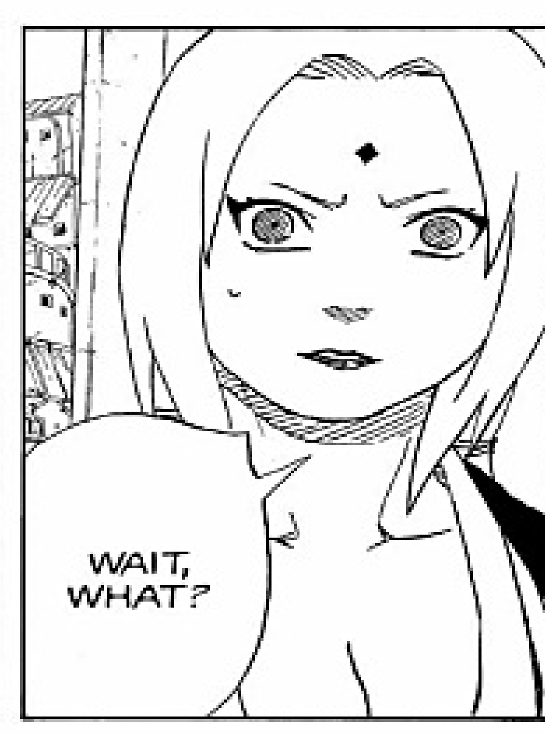

WHEN LEE DRANK THE POTION...
SLUMP

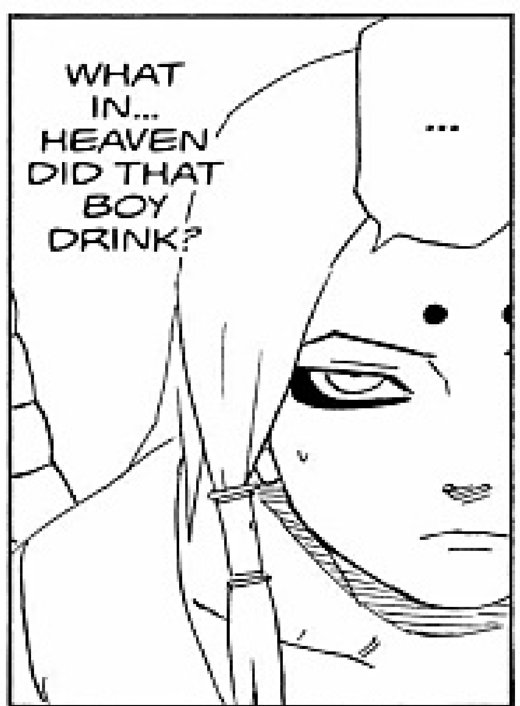
WHADDAYA LOOKIN' AT, YA JERK!?!

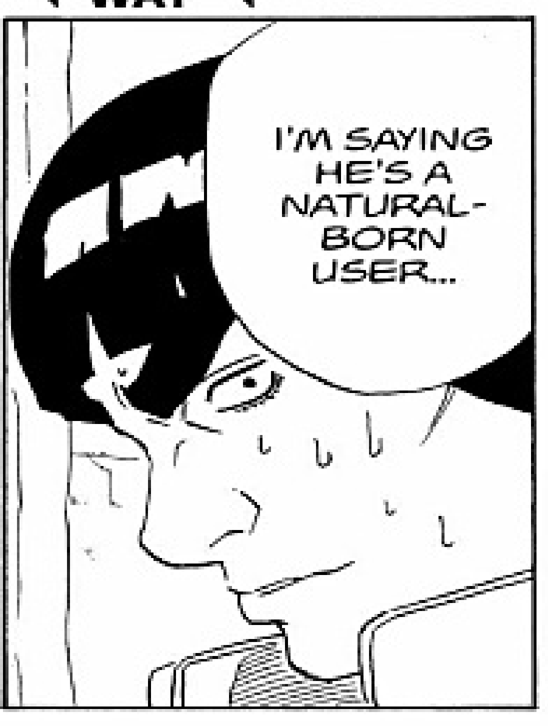
SHF









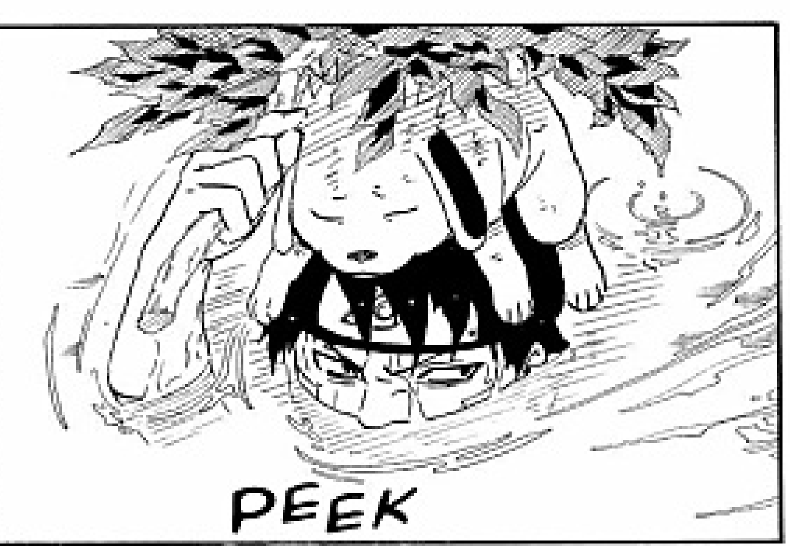


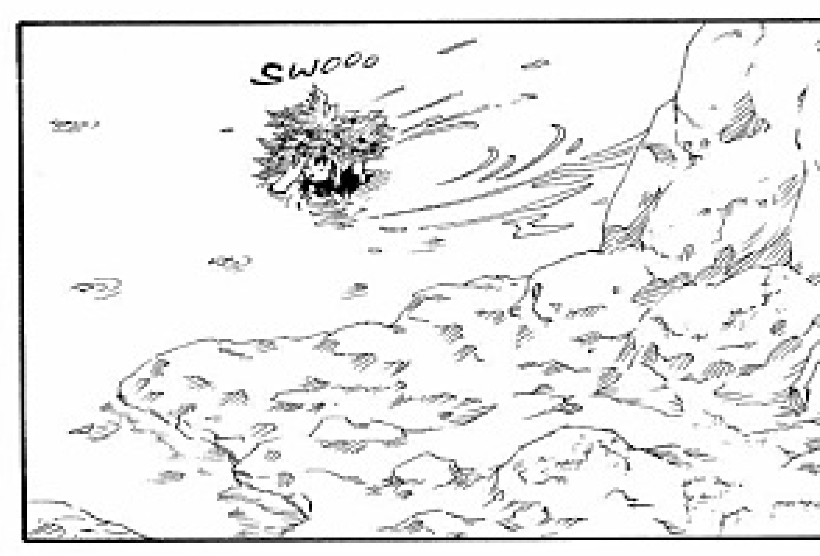
FWW

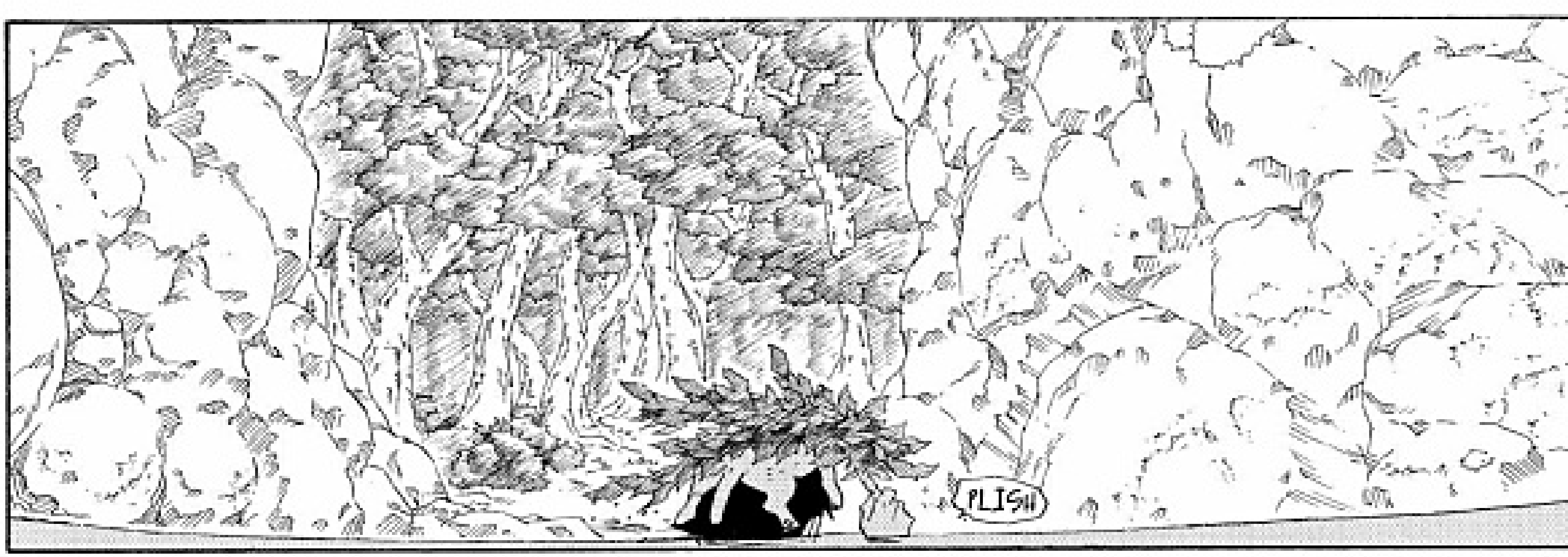
...OF THE **POTION PUNCH!!**


NARUTO
TM


Number 211: Unorthodox...!!

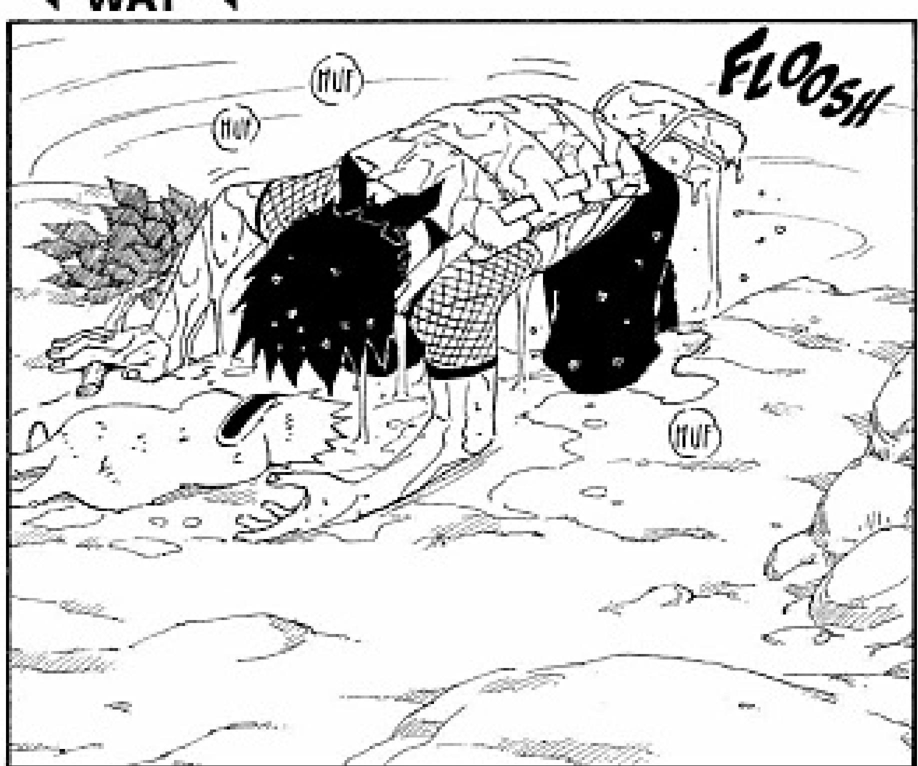

PEEK


SWOOO

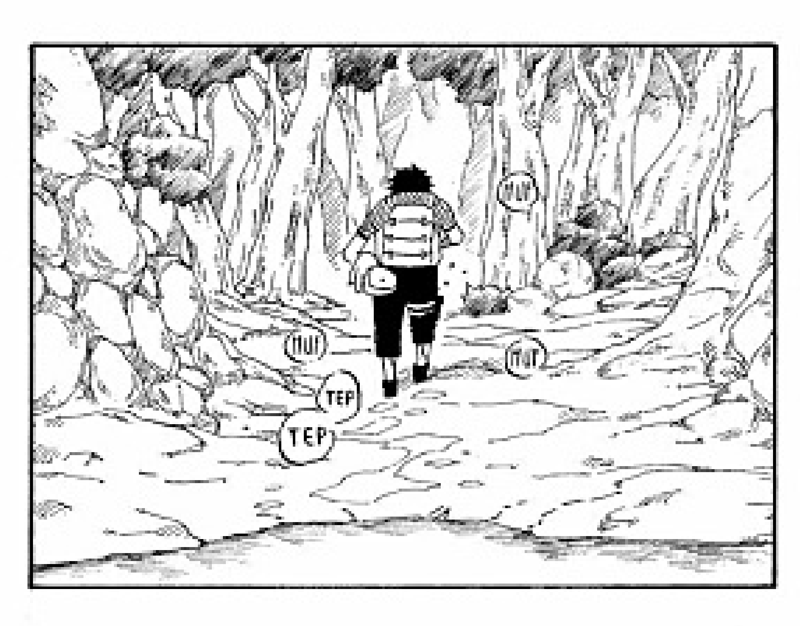

PLISH

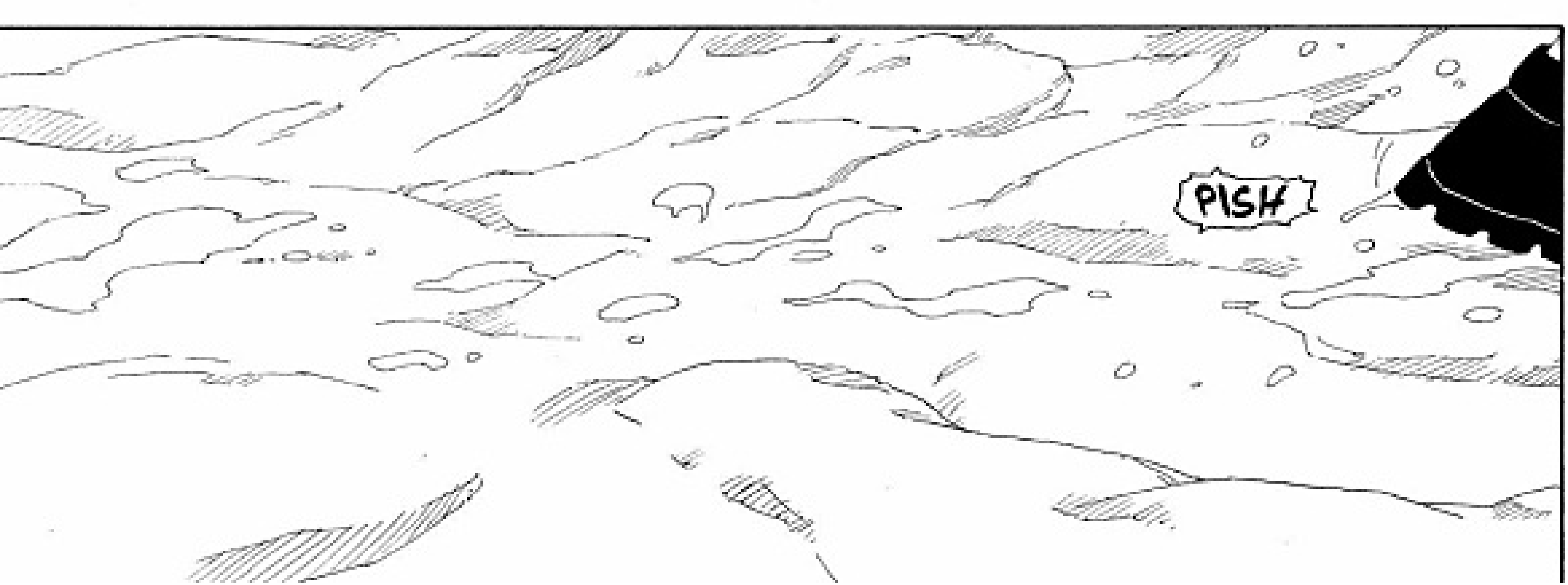

READ
THIS
WAY


FUP
SPISH


FLOOSH
HUF
HUF
HUF


HUF
HUF
UGH...
THIS WOUND... GUESS I NEED TO KEEP IT DRY...

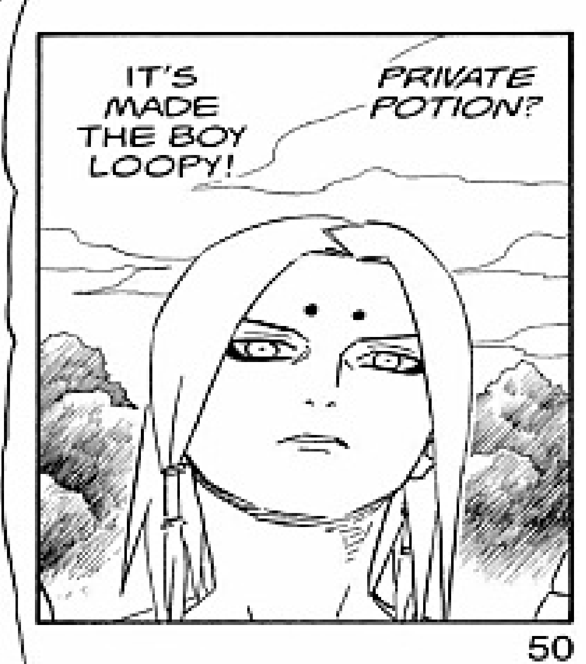

HUF
HUF
HUF
TEP
TEP


PISH

FWIW
FWIW


FWIW


UNH... *HIC*
FWIW


PRIVATE POTION?
IT'S MADE THE BOY LOOPY!


SHAA
HYEER I COM-MAH!!


HYAH!
FWOSH
FOOM
ACHAH!!
WIP
WSSH
!


DAM
TUK
!!
SNAG
SKSSH


READ THIS WAY
FSSH
!
FWEE
TWA KAK
SKSSH
HE'S TOO HARD TO PREDICT...
MORE-OVER, TOO FAST!!
SHK

TAK TAK TAK

WHOOSH

SHF



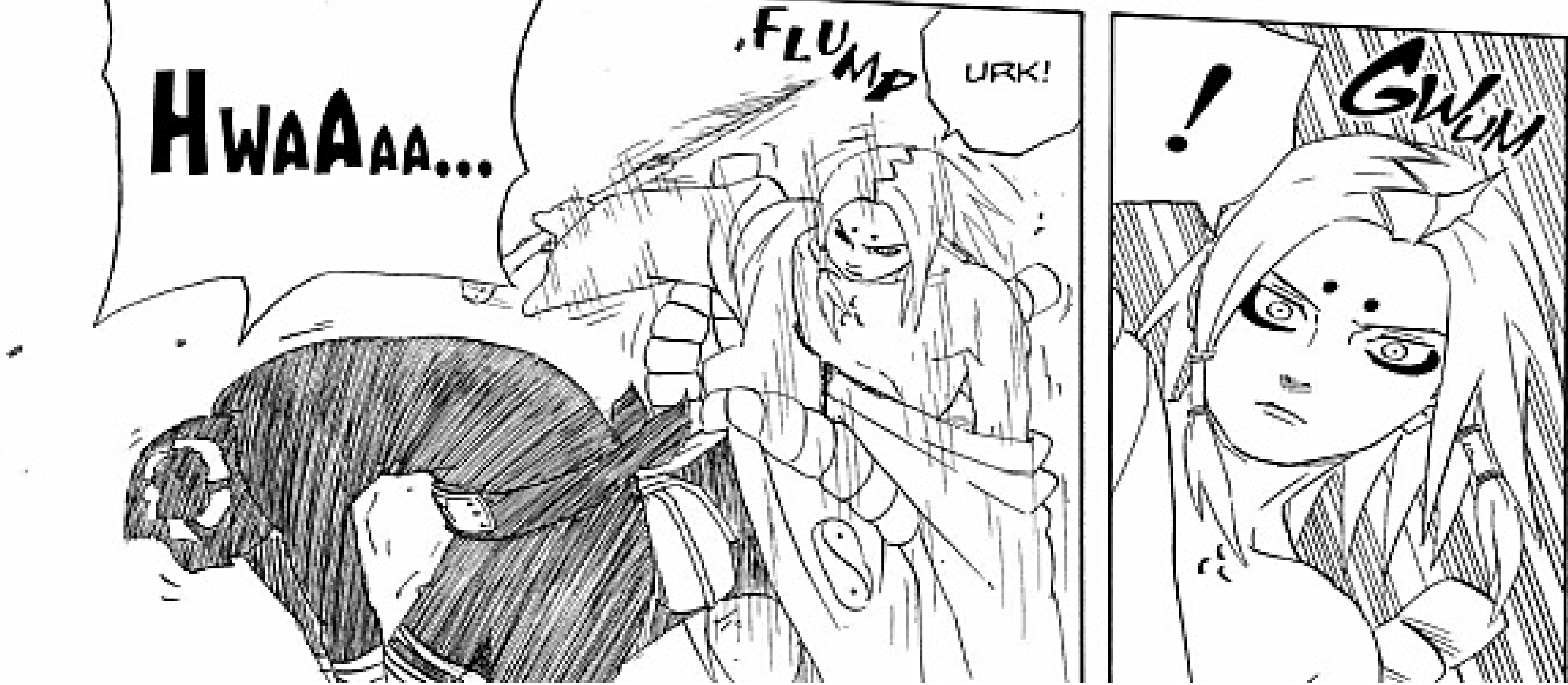



WSH WSH WSH
WSH WSH
WSH
WSH
SHOOM
SHOOM
SHOOM
SHOOM
SHOOM
WHISH
FOOSH
TOUCHÉ!!
KRIK
SWIP
?!


PAM
PAK
FASH
PAK
SWISH
!
SWIP
PEFF

FWOSH
!!
SWIP
FSSH
WSP

PAK
HA!
SHOVE
PAM
SHRUF





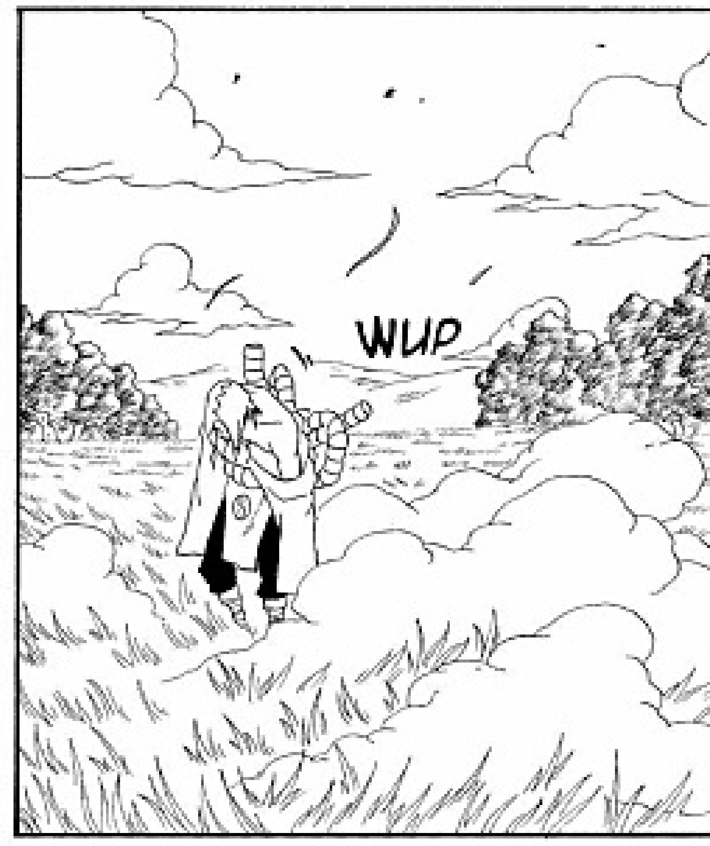


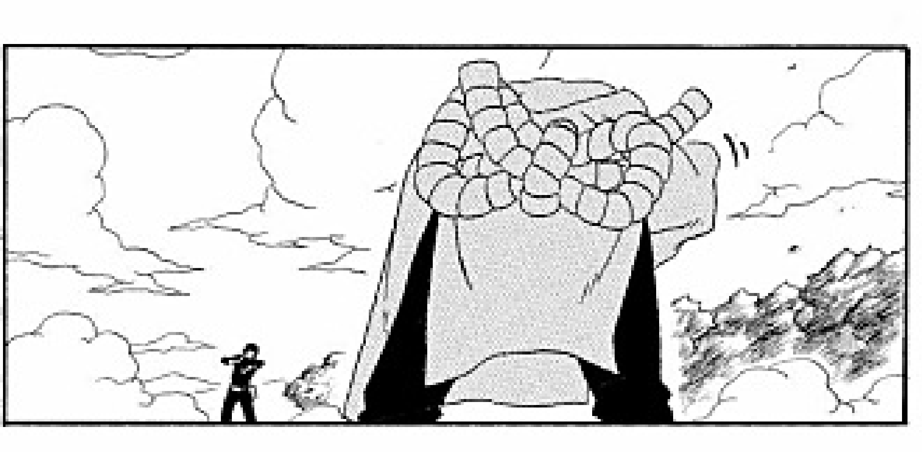
SKRSSSH


HIC

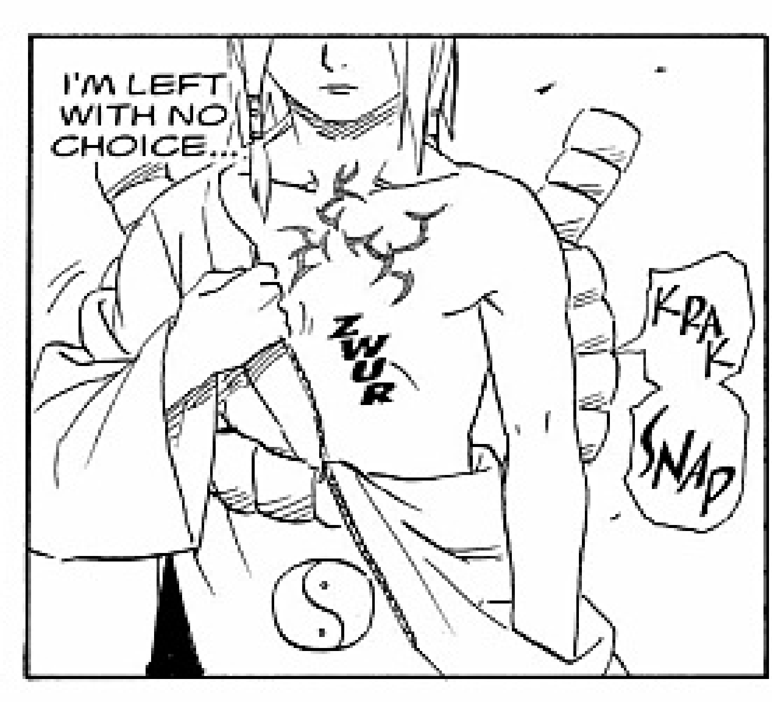

FWIW

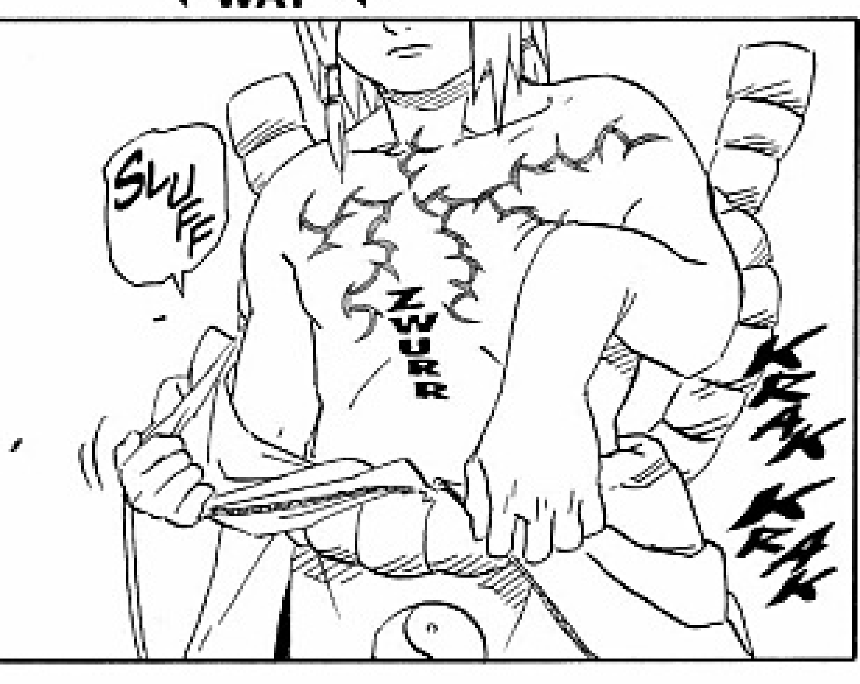

HE HIT ME... THAT TAIJUTSU IS SOMETHING ELSE.
I CAN'T READ HIS MOVES.

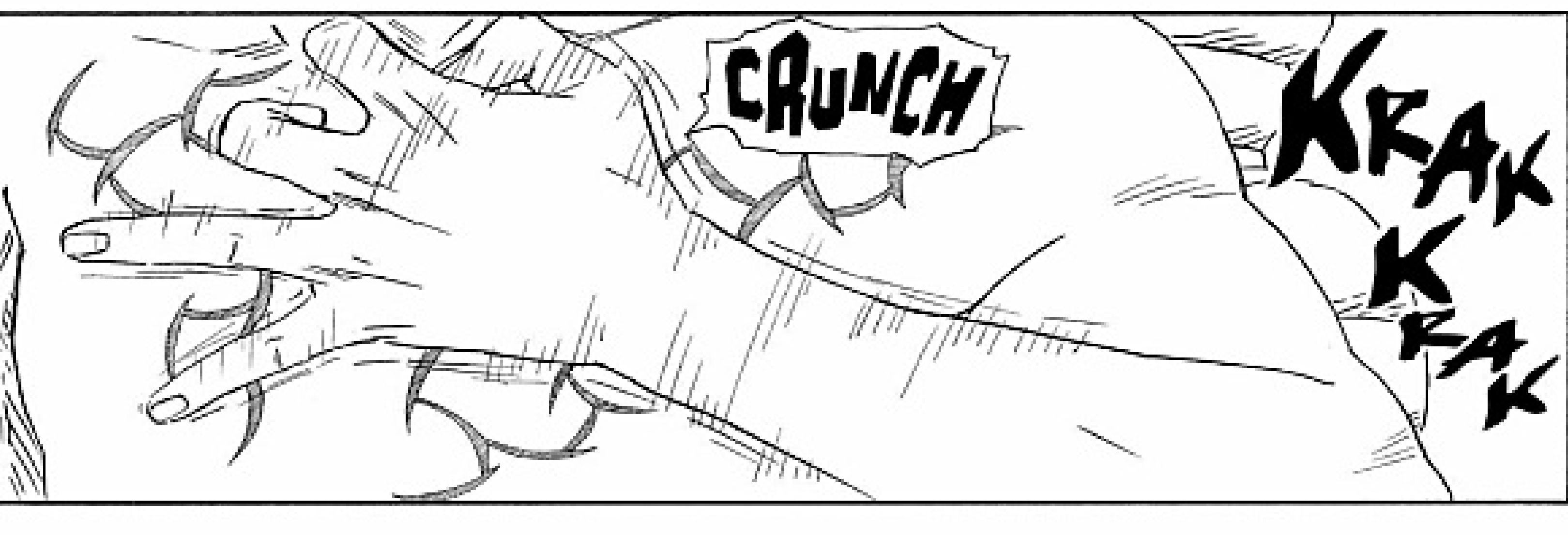

WUP



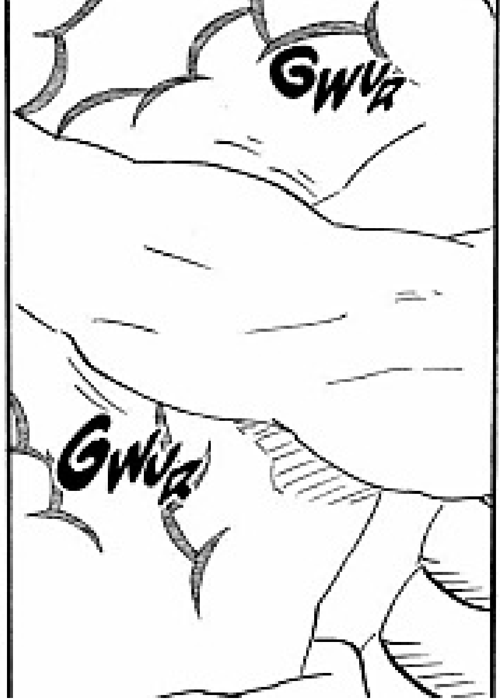
READ THIS WAY













SLURGE

MY ABILITIES STEM FROM MY BONES...

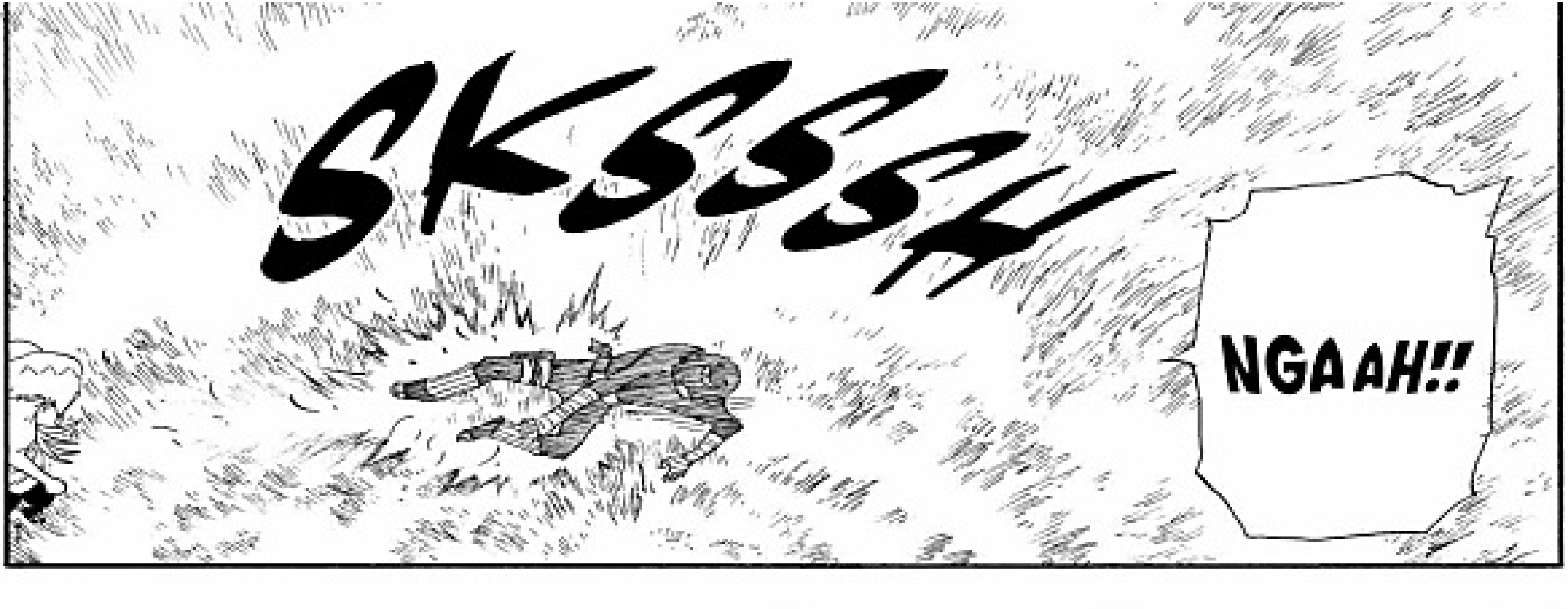
YOU WERE WARNED BY YOUR DOPPEL-GANGER FRIEND, NO?






PAM
SHK
SHOOM
PAM
SWAKK
SHK


?!
SLISH



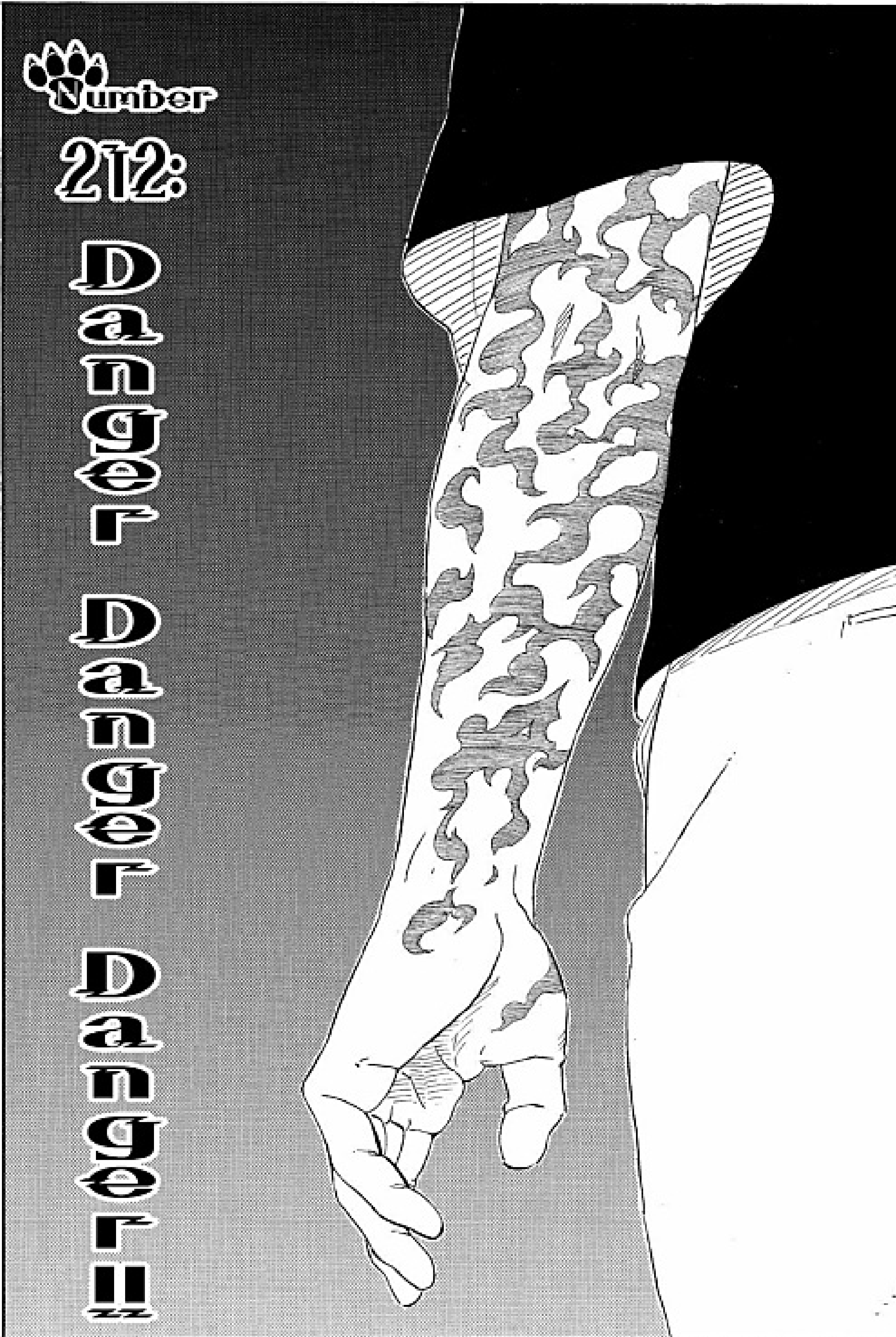


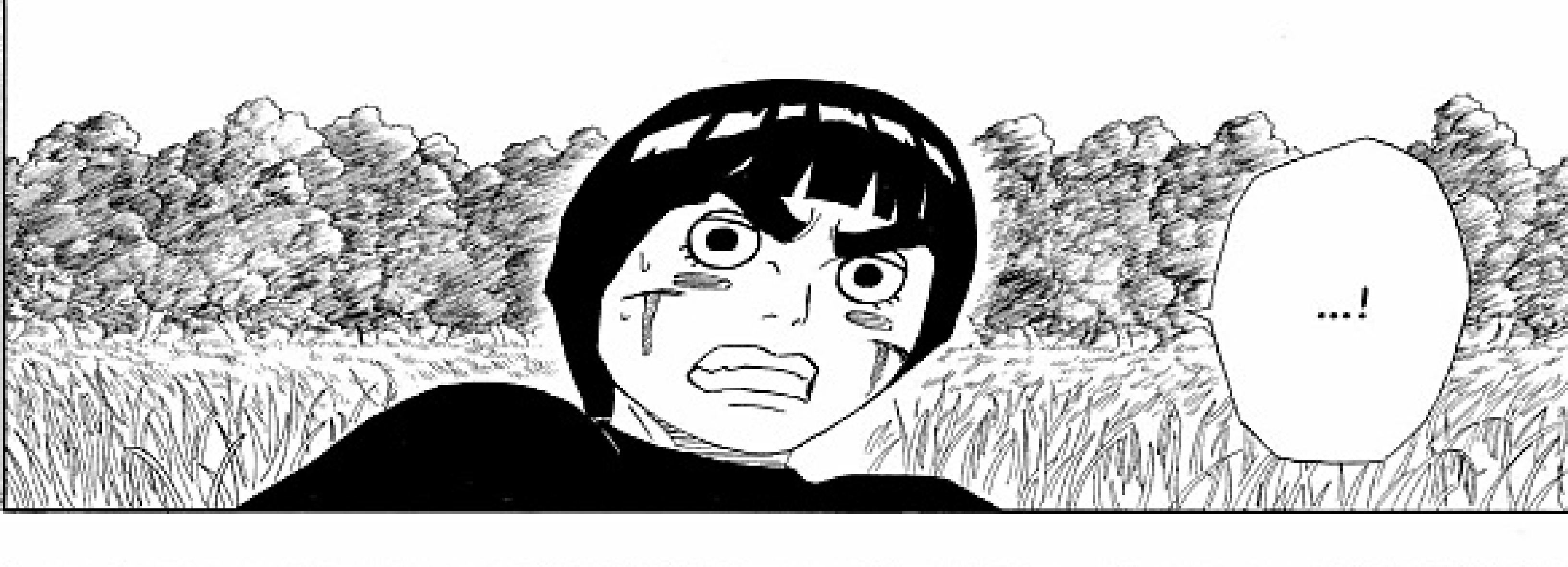


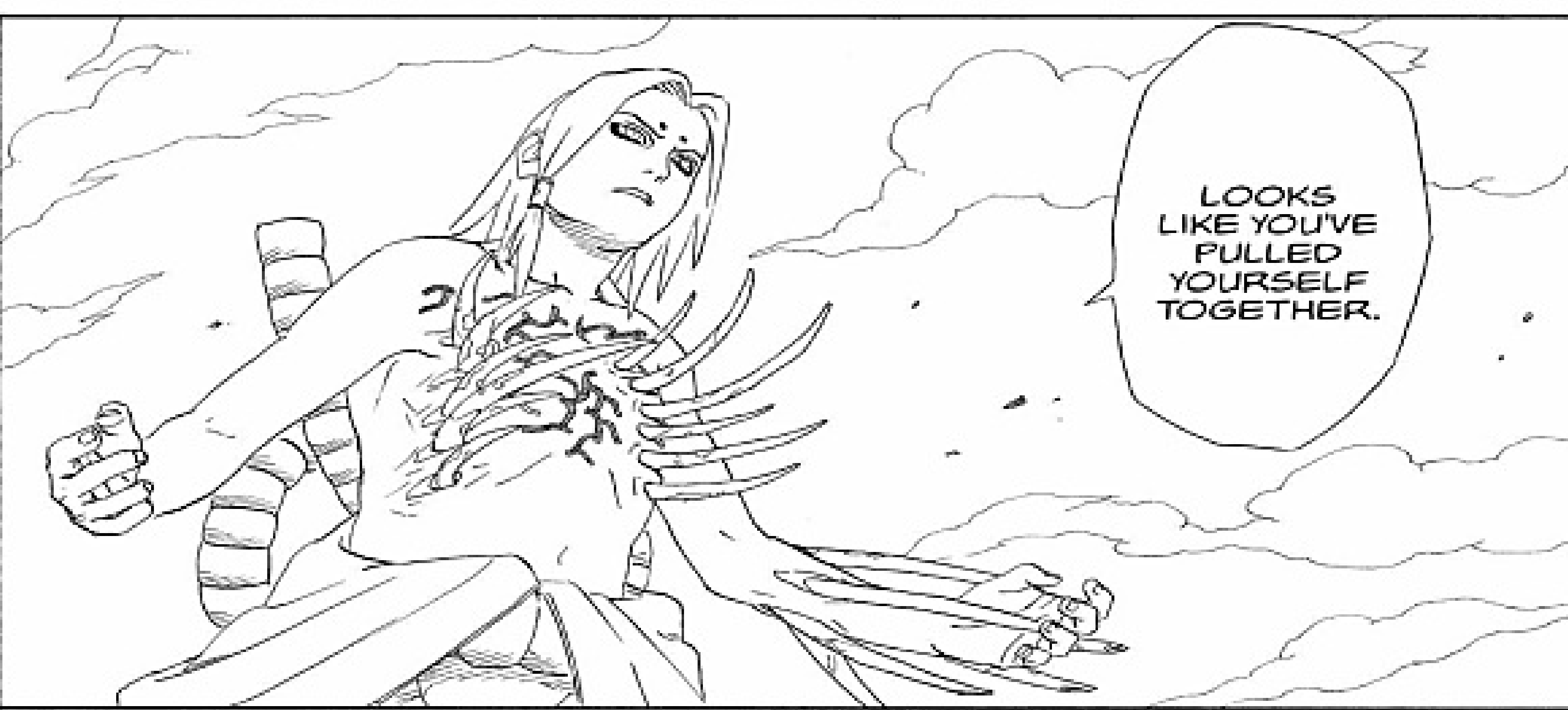
THIS IS MY KEKKEI GENKAI.

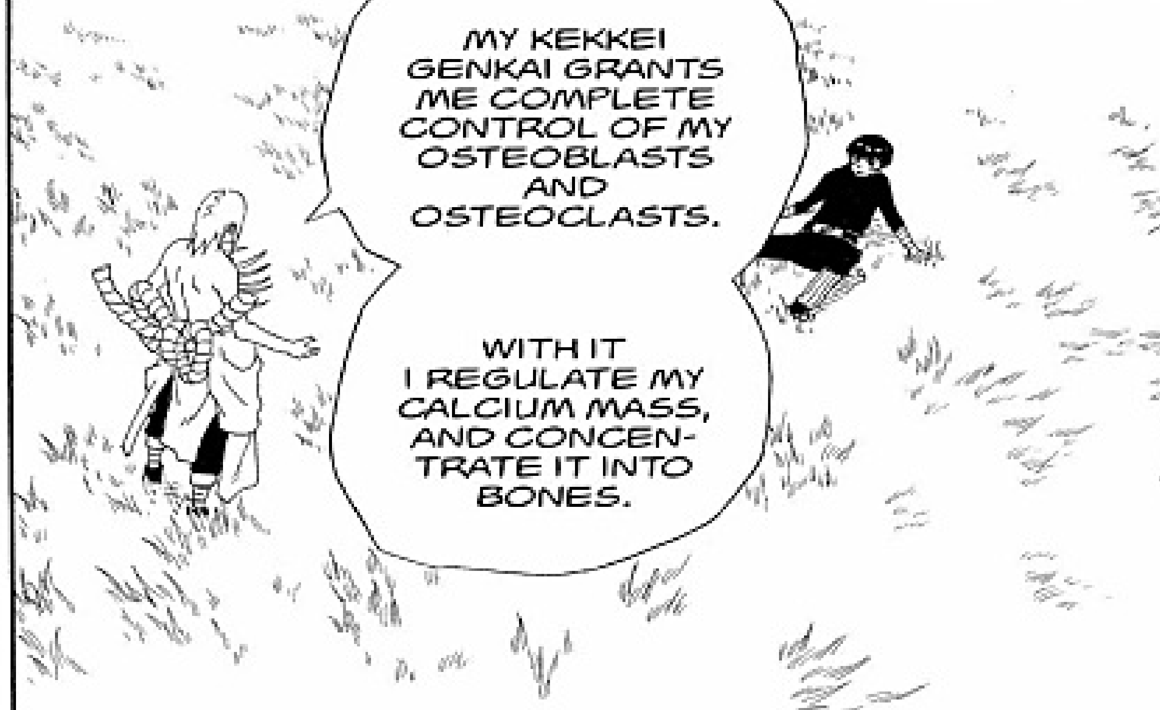
UNORTH-ODOX, AREN'T I?


NARUTO
TM

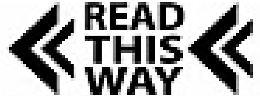

Number
212:
Danger Danger Danger!!

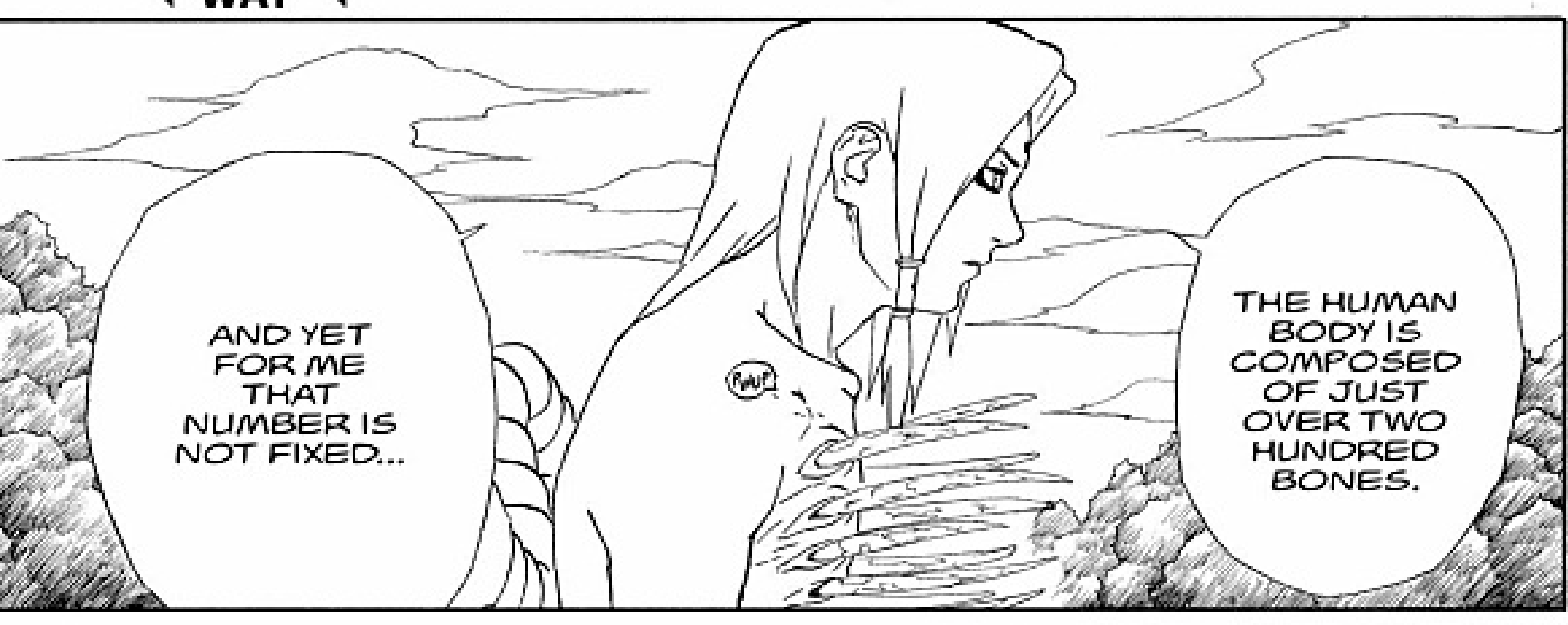

...!


LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE PULLED YOURSELF TOGETHER.


MY KEKKEI GENKAI GRANTS ME COMPLETE CONTROL OF MY OSTEOBLASTS AND OSTEOCLASTS.
WITH IT I REGULATE MY CALCIUM MASS, AND CONCENTRATE IT INTO BONES.


SHF
KEKKEI GENKAI?!
...?

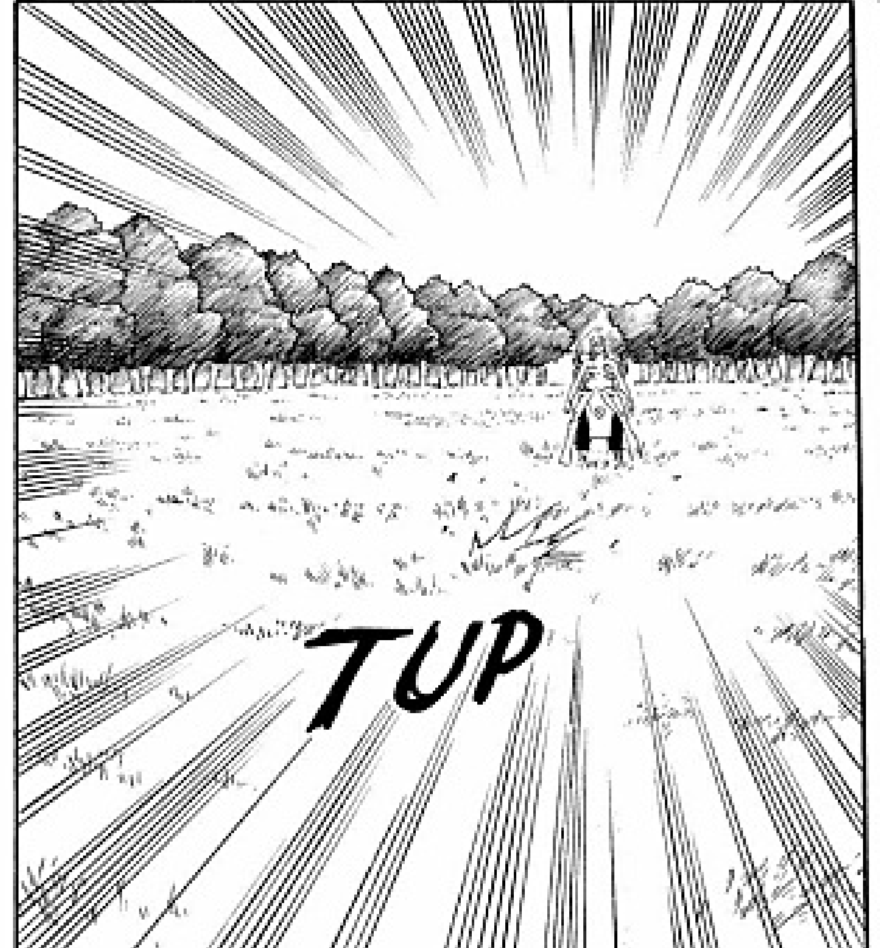

READ THIS WAY


THE HUMAN BODY IS COMPOSED OF JUST OVER TWO HUNDRED BONES.
AND YET FOR ME THAT NUMBER IS NOT FIXED...


SHLIK


SLURGE


HMPH...
SHFF


TUP


SKIFF
KARAMATSU NO MAI! LARCH DANCE!
PUP
PUP
PUP
PUP
KASHOOM SHOOM SHOOM SH
!

READ THIS WAY

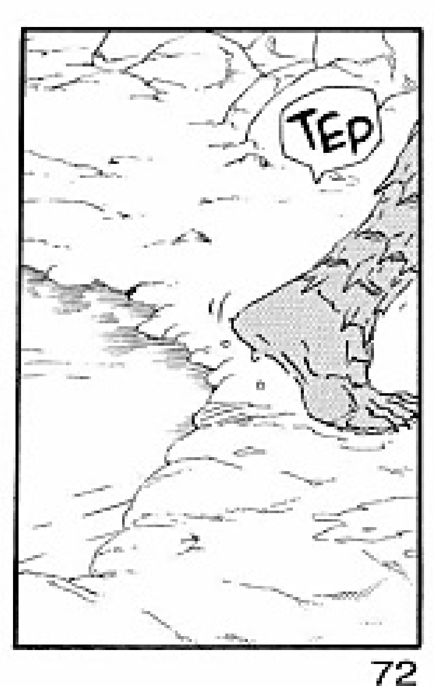
SPOK






THAT'S IT... I CAN'T MOVE ANOTHER INCH...
HUF
HUF

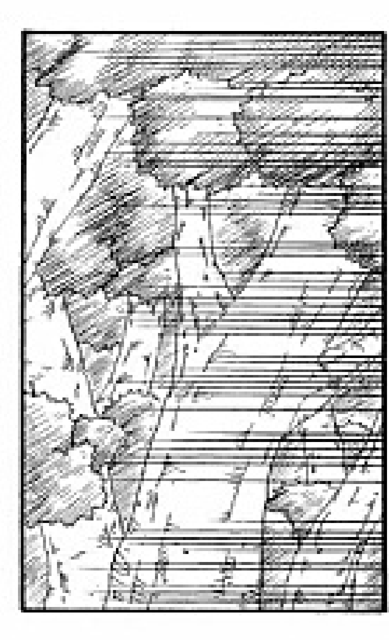

!!
SNUFF

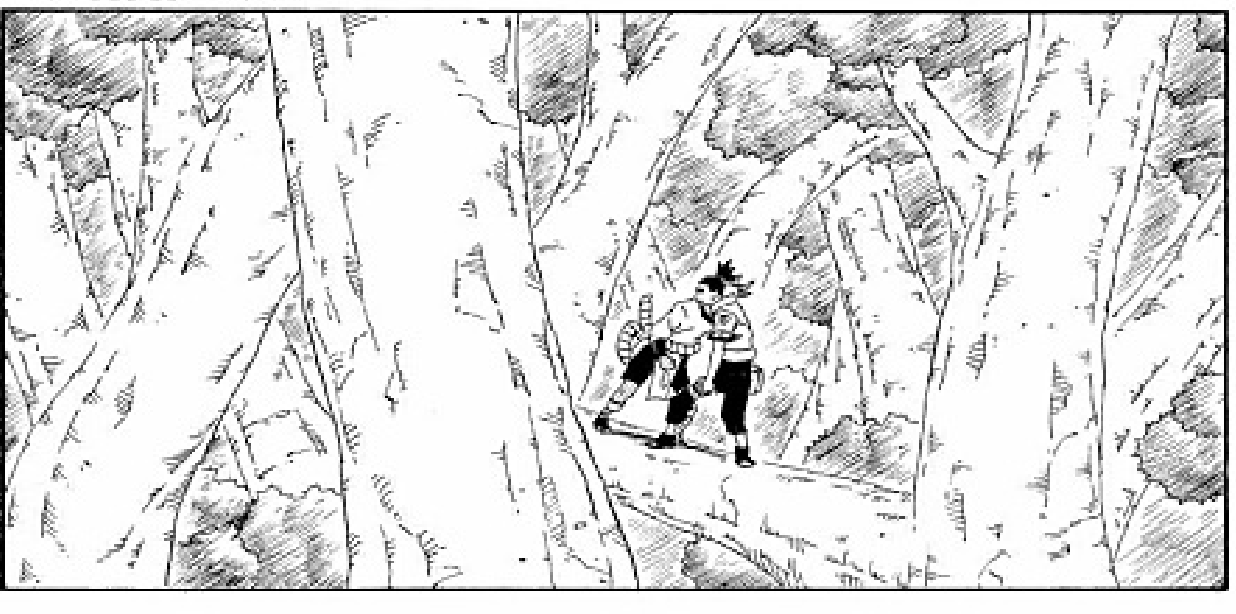

TEP


OH NO...
HE'S CAUGHT UP ALREADY?!


AND...


READ THIS WAY

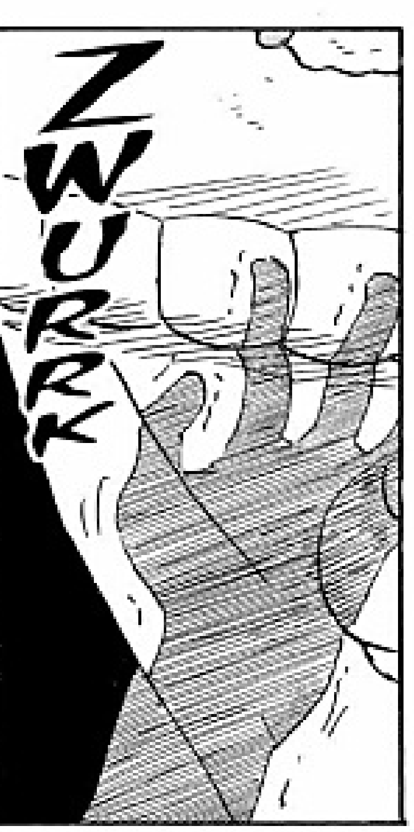





GRRG...


URRK...
RATS... THIS KEEPS UP, I'LL RUN CLEAN OUT OF CHAKRA...

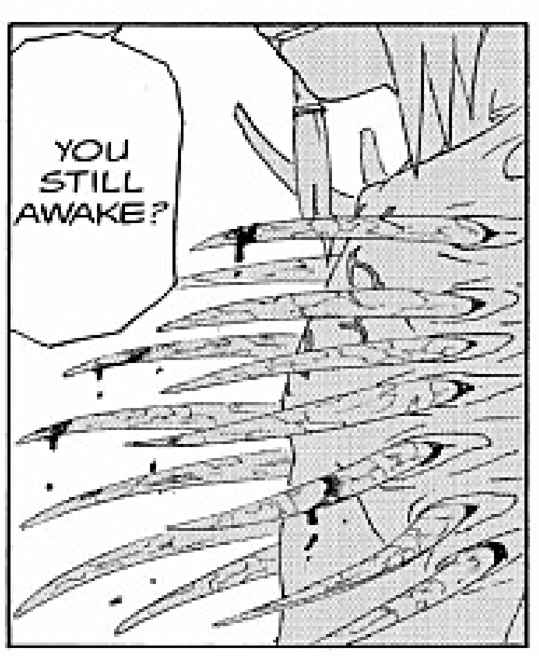

ZWURK


ZWURRK

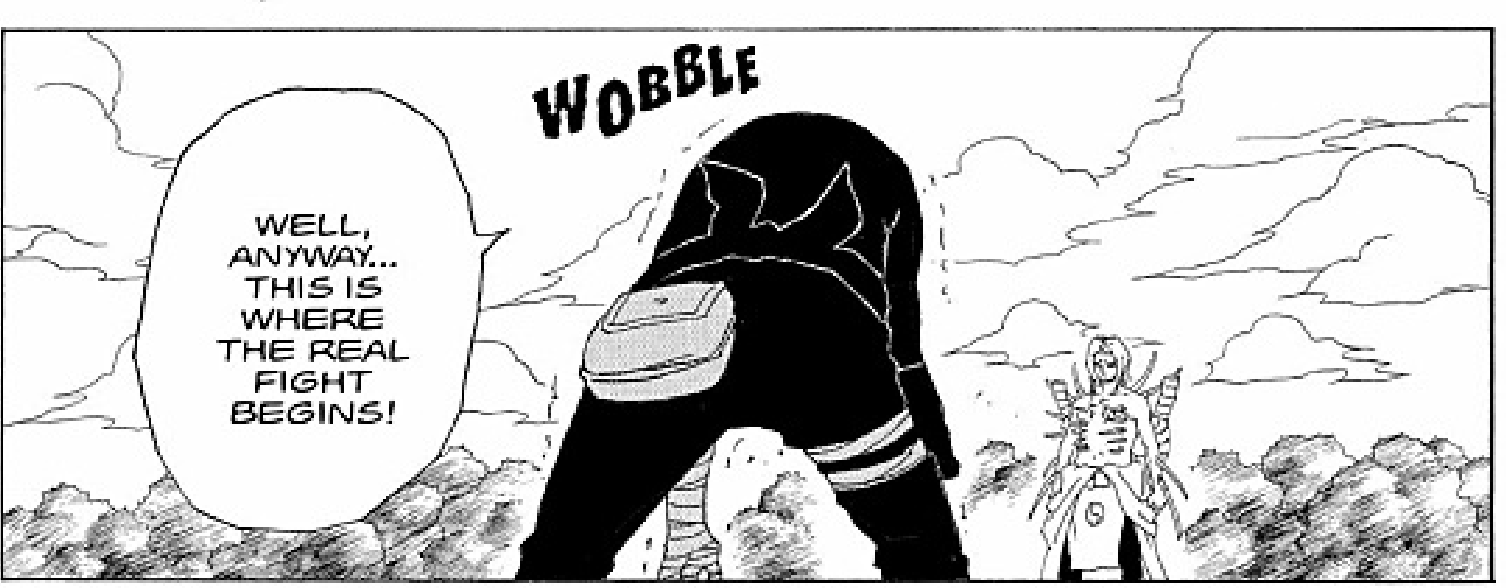

OKAY, CALM DOWN.
NEED SOME KINDA STRATEGY HERE...
THINK, SHIKAMARU. THINK! THERE'S GOTTA BE SOME WAY...

HOOOOO


HUF
HUF

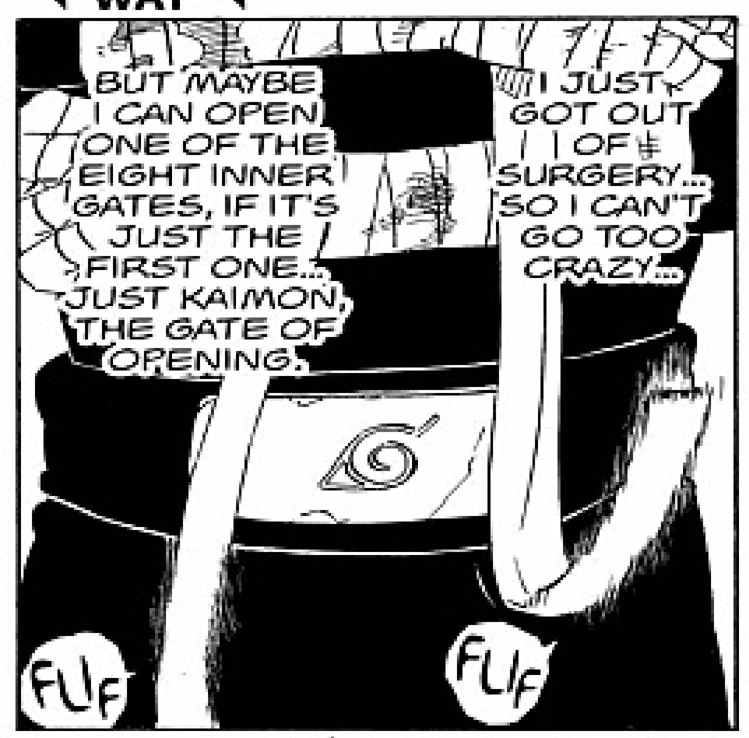

YOU STILL AWAKE?


...
FOR SOME REASON... I DON'T FEEL SO GOOD...

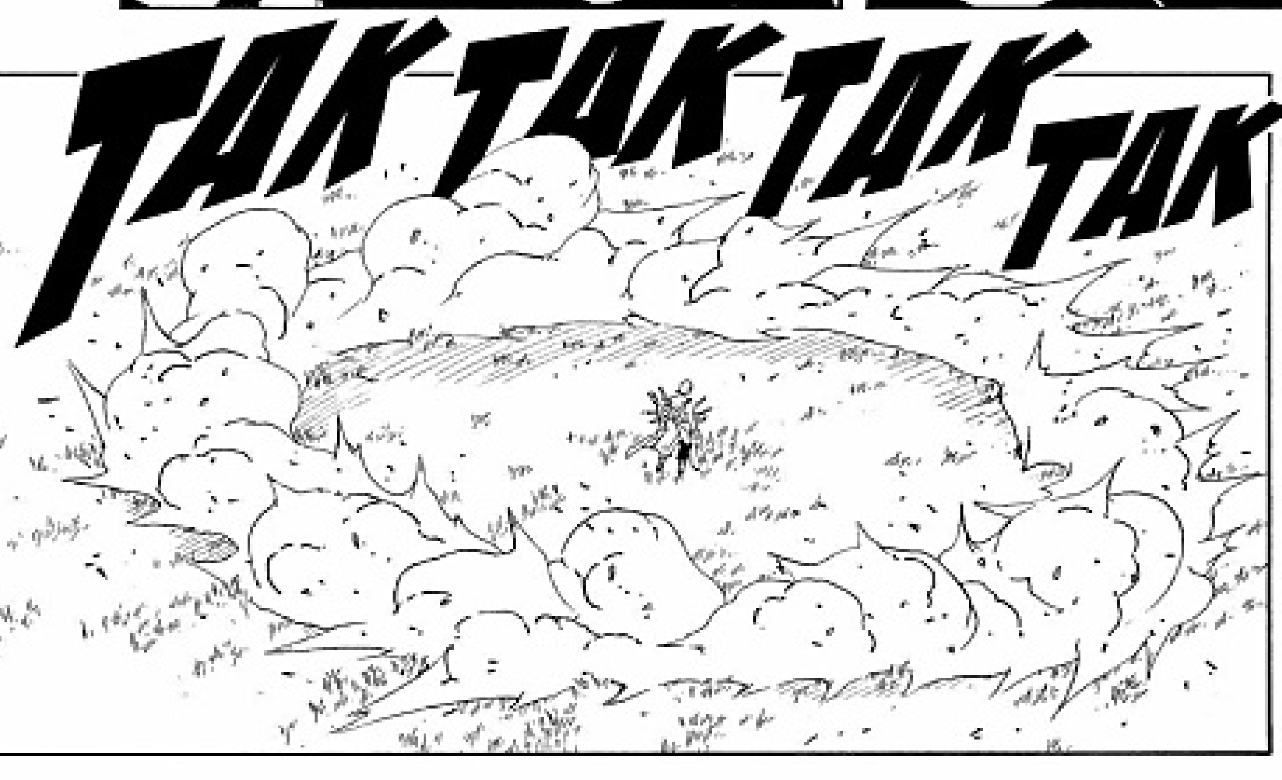

WOBBLE
WELL, ANYWAY... THIS IS WHERE THE REAL FIGHT BEGINS!


READ THIS WAY


RIGHT NOW MY JOB IS TO HOLD HIM AS LONG AS I CAN.
SO I GUESS I SHOULD AVOID ANY MOVES BIG ENOUGH TO... WELL, KILL ME...


I JUST GOT OUT OF SURGERY... SO I CAN'T GO TOO CRAZY...
BUT MAYBE I CAN OPEN ONE OF THE EIGHT INNER GATES, IF IT'S JUST THE FIRST ONE... JUST KAIMON, THE GATE OF OPENING.
FLIF
FLIF

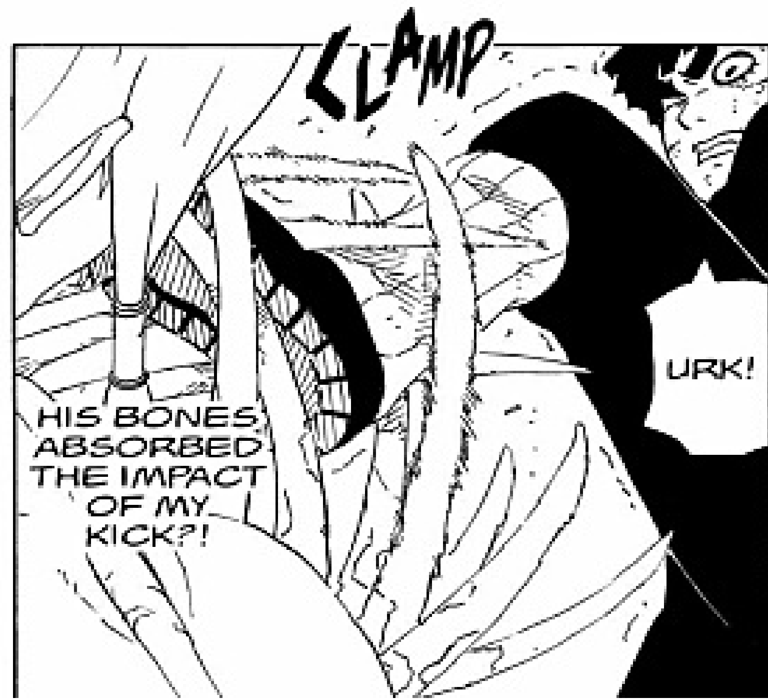

...


TAK TAK TAK TAK

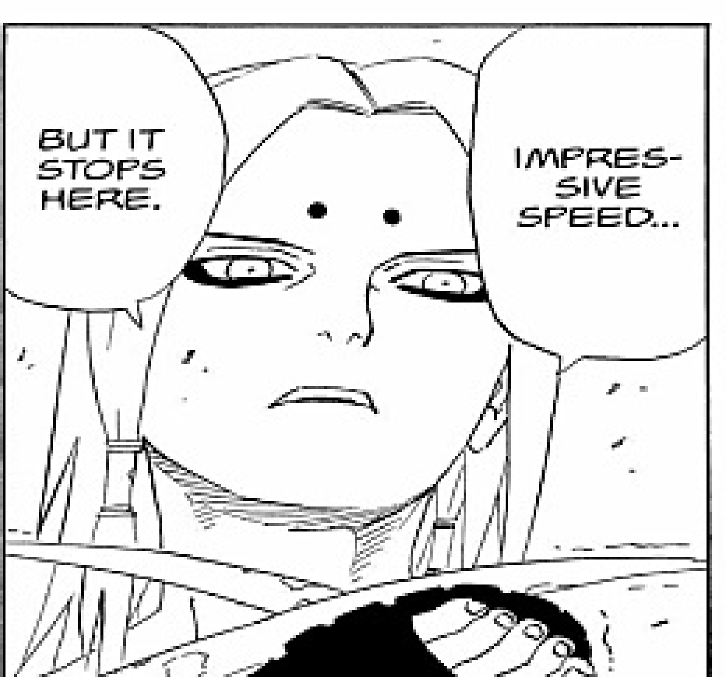

FOR-WARD LOTUS!!

SPAK

?!!



CLAMP
URK!
HIS BONES ABSORBED THE IMPACT OF MY KICK?!

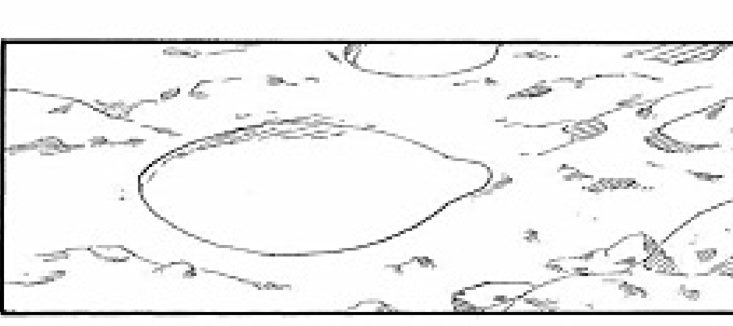


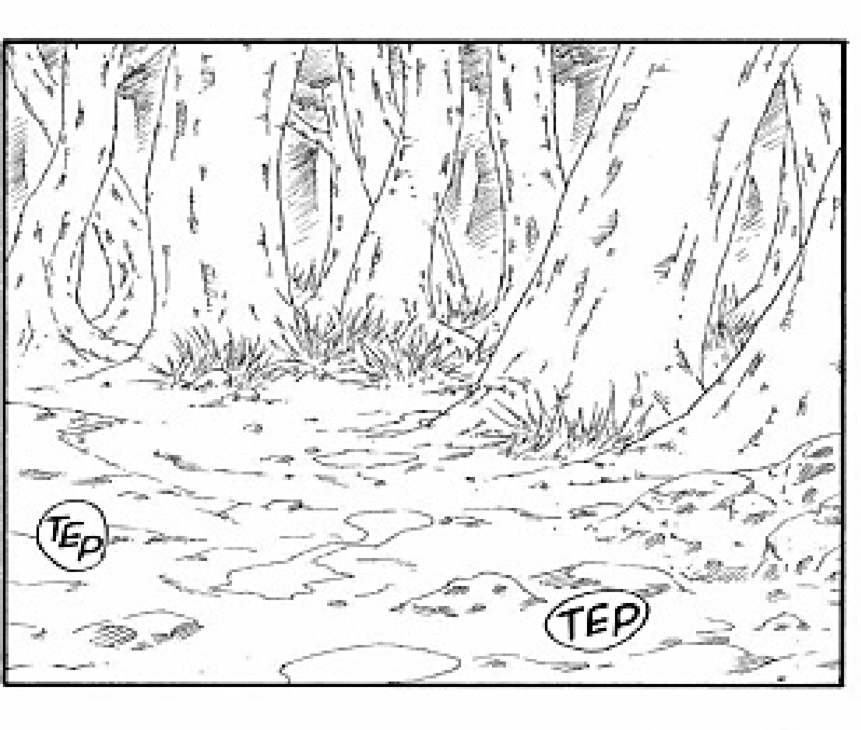
IMPRES-SIVE SPEED...
BUT IT STOPS HERE.


READ THIS WAY

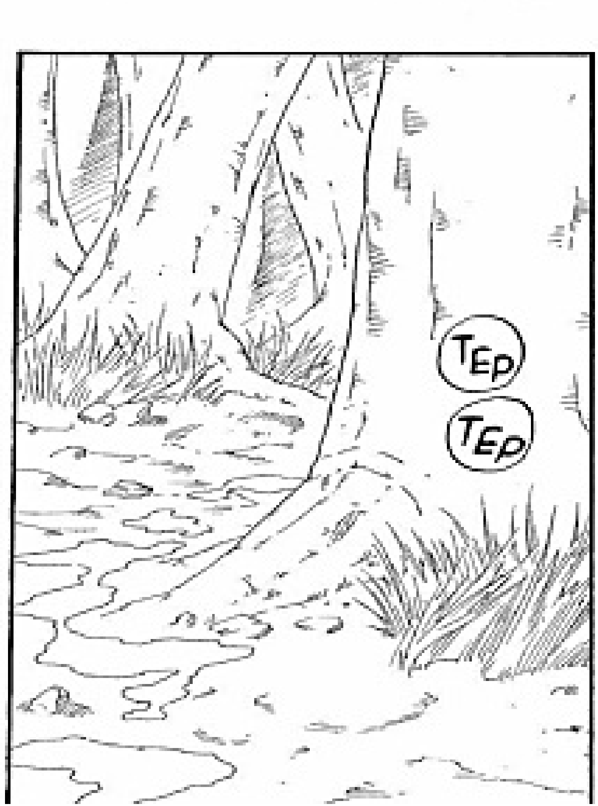

?!!


POP
SHNNG

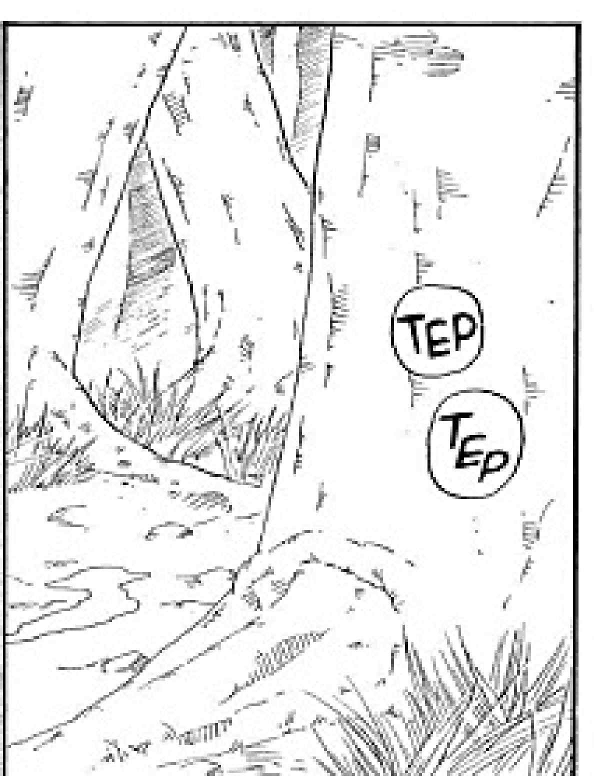



TEP
TEP


TEP


TEP
TEP


...


TEP
TEP


GRUNT!
TEP
GRR...
UNGH...

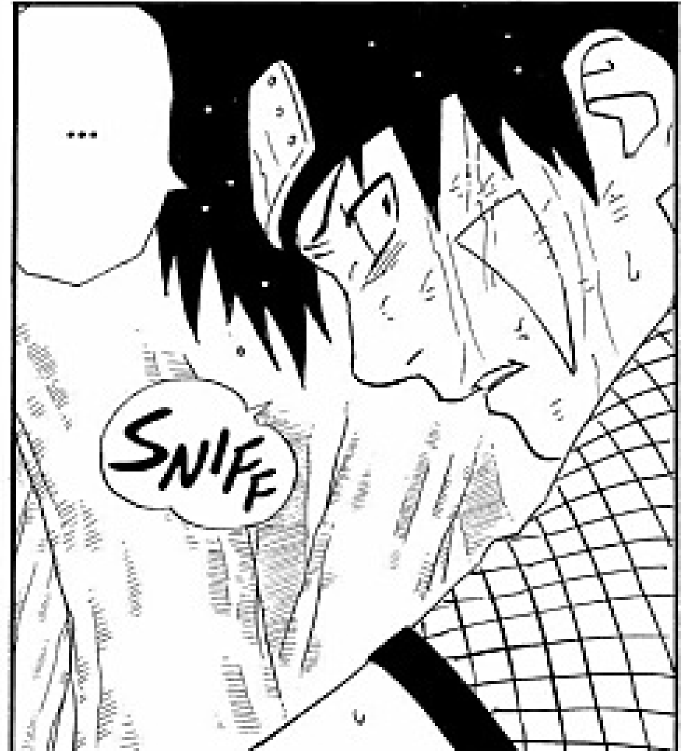

READ THIS WAY


...
I'M NEARLY DRAINED...


THERE'S NO ONE COMING FOR ME. IT'S NOT LIKE THAT TIME WITH MASTER ASUMA...


JUST A LITTLE MORE... SCUMBAG!


COME ON... WHERE'S THE GOOD IN HOPING FOR A MIRACLE?
GET AHOLD OF YOURSELF!


...
SNIFF


HIS SCENT'S FADING...
PHEW. I'M... I'M SAFE.

?!!

WHO'S SAFE?


!


WAIT. MY JACKET?!


I KNEW IT... HEH HEH.
IT'S HARD TO DETECT YOUR OWN SCENT, ISN'T IT. IT'S ALL TOO FAMILIAR.


SO THAT'S HOW YOU ERASED YOUR SCENT, HUH?
LITTLE WONDER I COULDN'T PLACE YOU.
I'M IMPRESSED. YOU DO KNOW HOW ODOR WORKS.


READ THIS WAY


SHF
SNIK
AND THEN... THERE'S THE WAY YOU SPLIT UP TO HUNT. THAT DID A NUMBER ON US.
AW, RATS.


I'M STANDING BEFORE YOU. DON'T YOU THINK NOW IS A GOOD TIME TO BEG FOR YOUR LIFE?
HUH?!
SHFF


WIPE THAT SMIRK OFF YOUR FACE!
WSSH
THOK

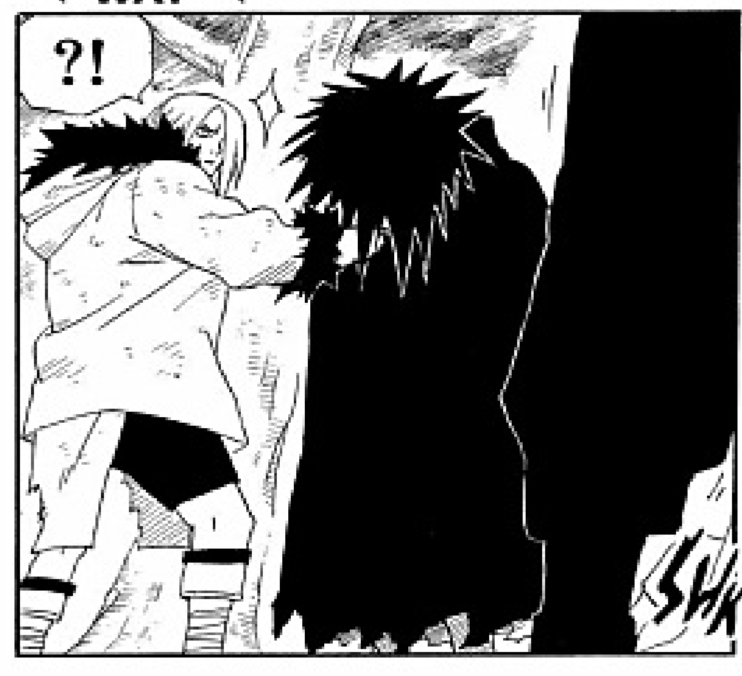

CRUD... I CAN'T THINK OF A SINGLE WAY OUT OF THIS.
THAT'S IT, THEN. I'M DONE FOR.
GRR


SHRUKK
TWIK
NOW DIE!!
FOOSH


GAH!
GWEEN
?!!
?!!
SKF
!!
URK!
WHO THE...
SKOK
SKOK

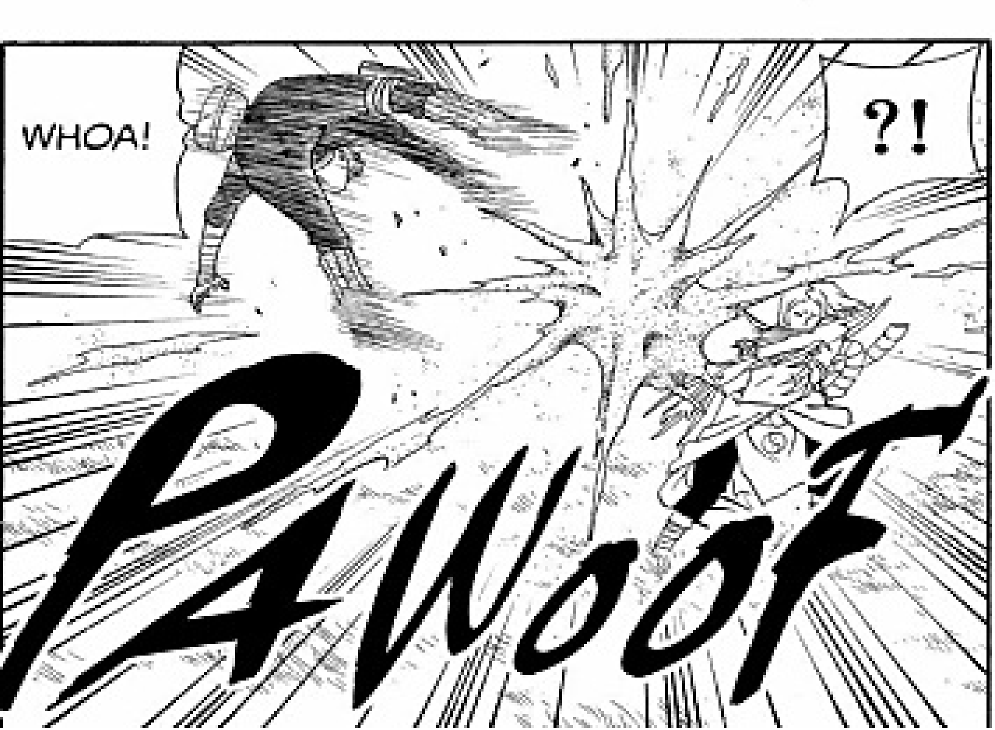

READ
THIS
WAY


WHAT THE...
!


?!
SHK


LOOKS LIKE I'VE GOT AN ALLY.


SPAP


?!
WHOA!
PAWOOF


AND YOU ARE...?
BLOOF


KLANG
... NINJA.

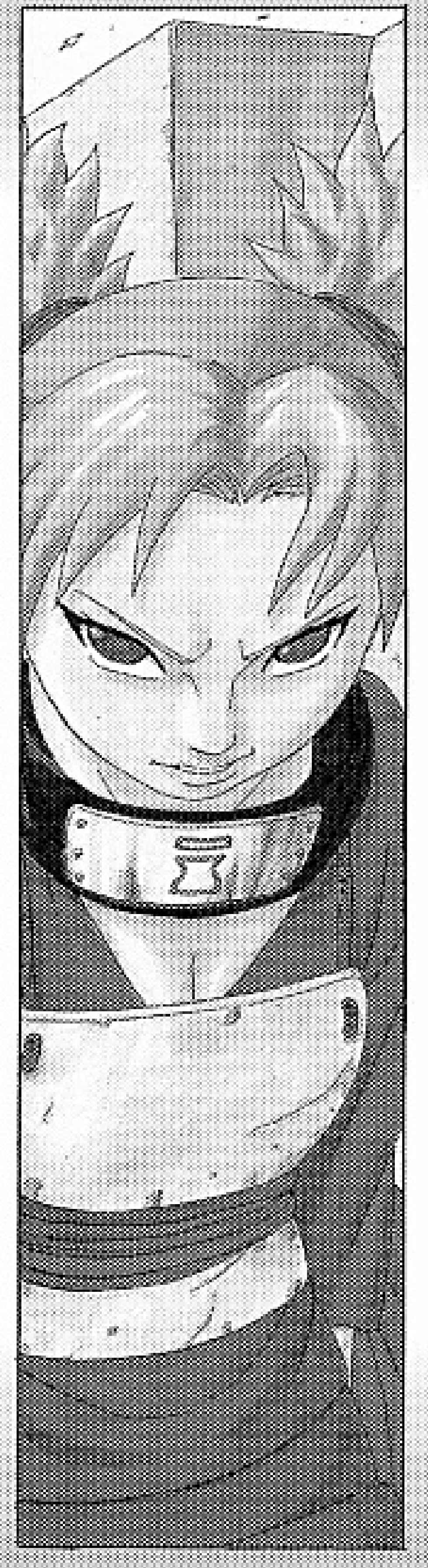

TEP
ALLIES OF KONOHA.
THE SAND...

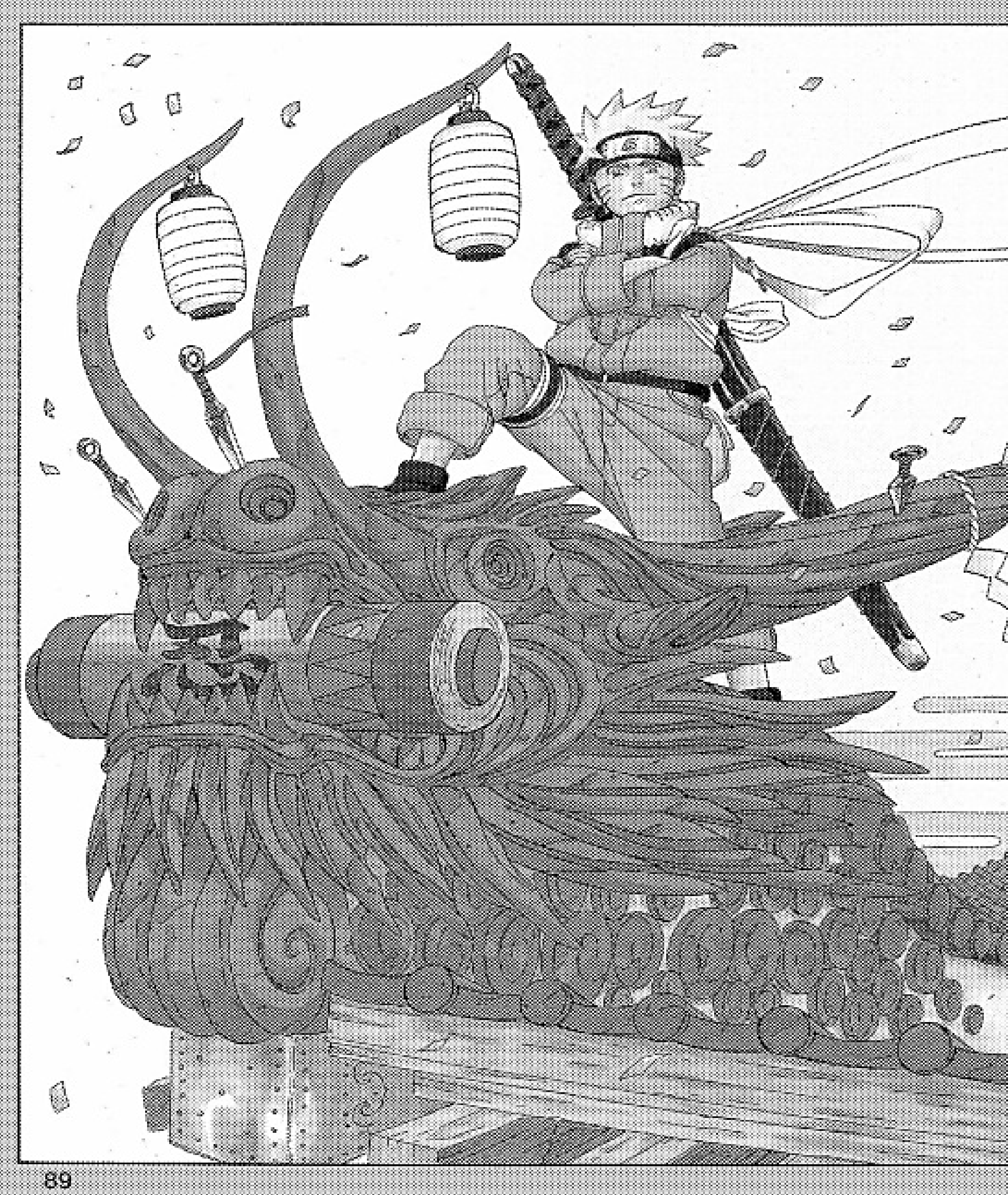

NARUTO
TM

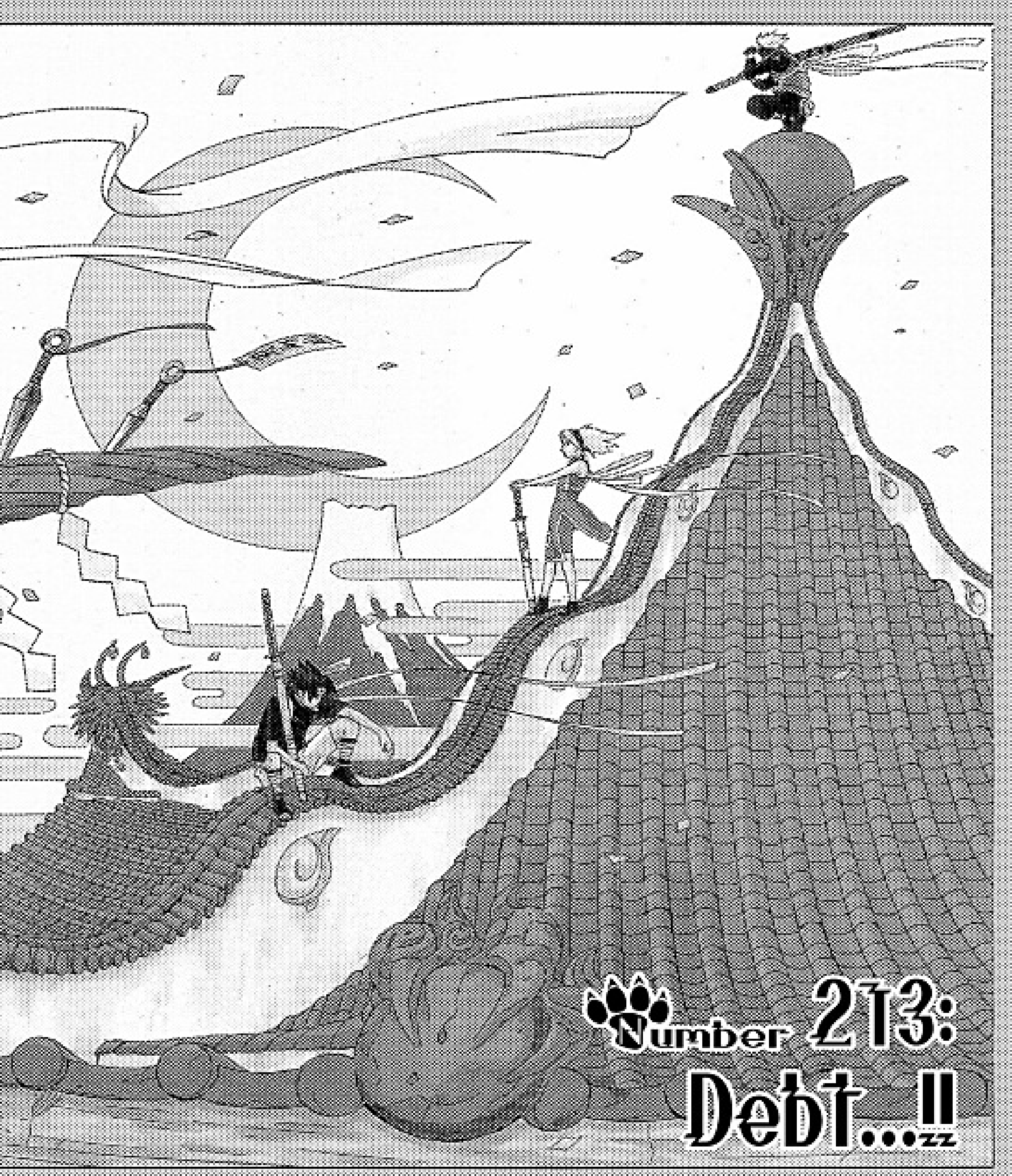
Number 213: Debt...!!







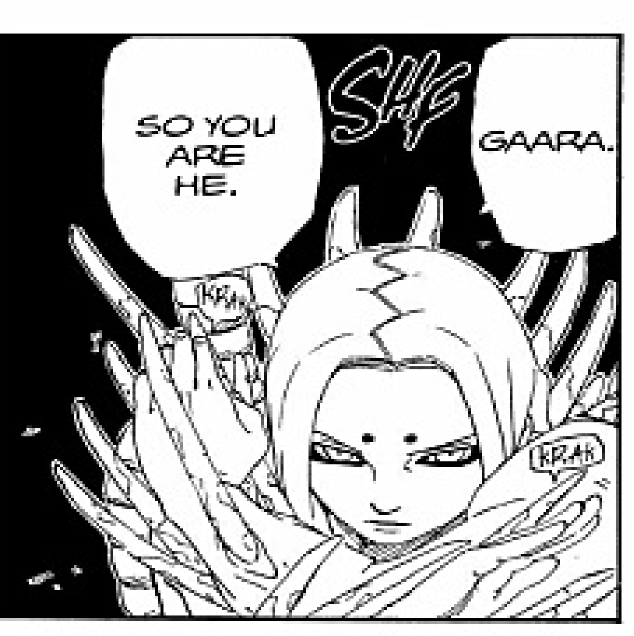



Number 213:
Debt...!!


NARUTO
-ナルト-



SHK
SHK


SO YOU ARE HE.
SHK
GAARA.
KRAK
KRAK


SHK
GAARA OF THE SAND...


AM I STILL LOOPY?
SAND?!
SHK
SHK

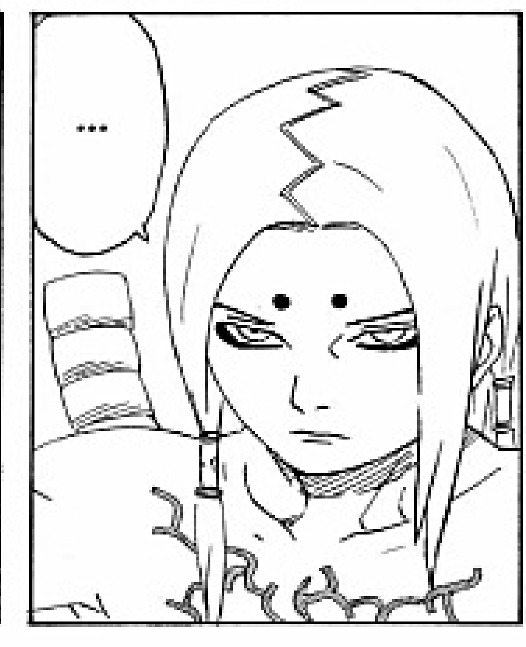

TESHI-SENDAN! DIGITAL SHRAPNEL!!
FSSH
FSSH
SHOOMSHOOM


POFF
POFF
POFF
POFF
POFF
POFF
POFF
...
WEEN
PFUP
PLIK


READ THIS WAY


DID HE JUST FIRE THE BONES FROM HIS FINGERTIPS?!


YOU'RE IMPA-TIENT.


...

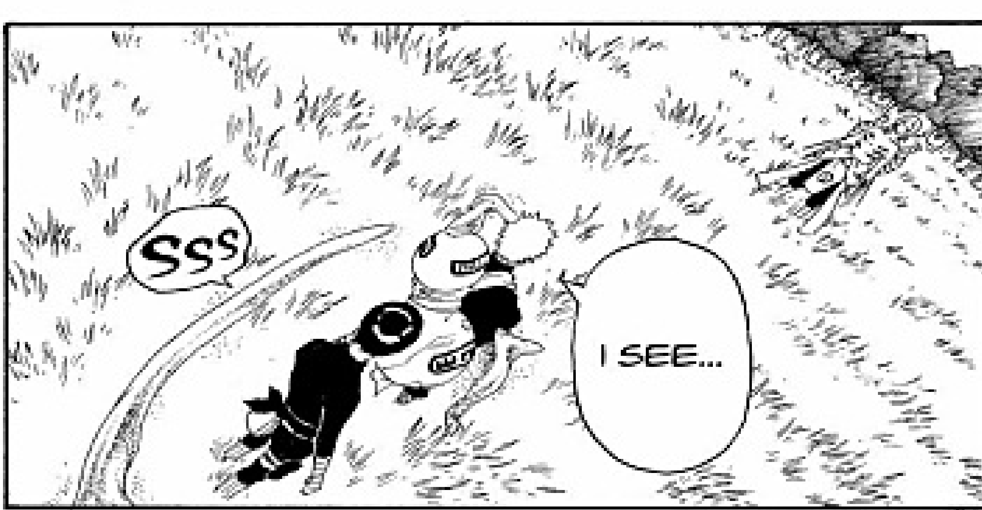

WHEN LAST WE FOUGHT...
YOU WERE FASTER AND SHARPER THAN THIS.
!

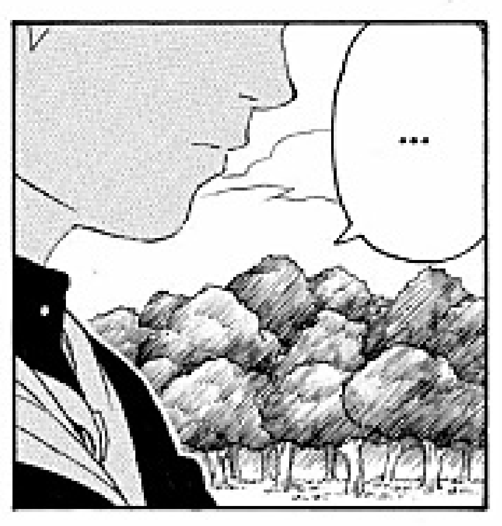

...


THANKS FOR REMINDING ME.
WUP

NOT THAT I HOLD A GRUDGE...

BUT YOU REALLY DID A NUMBER ON ME.



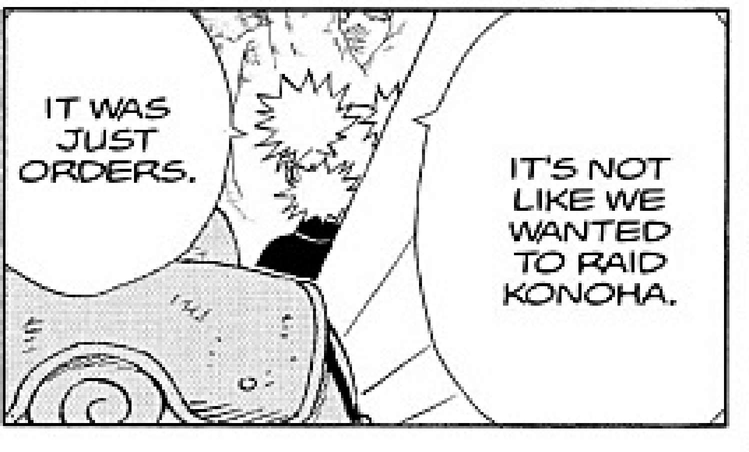




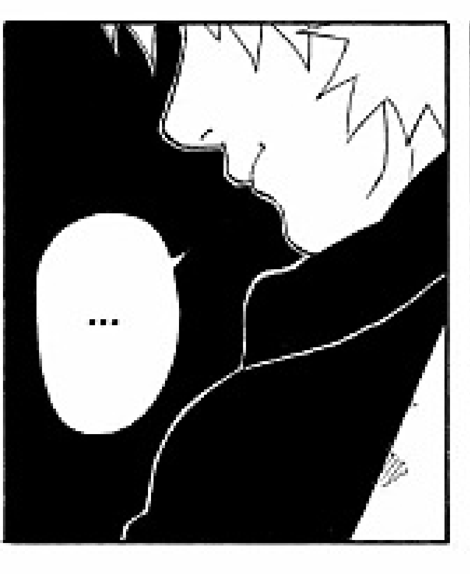



I OWE KONOHA ...
...A GREAT DEBT.

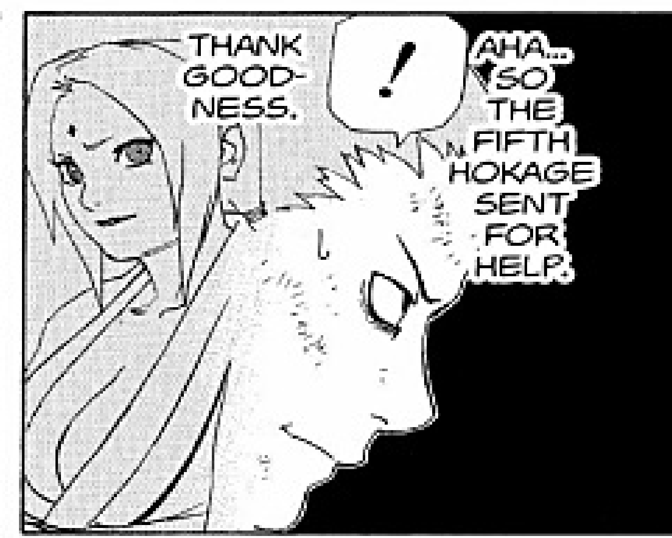

I HEARD WE MADE UP WITH THE TRAITORS FROM THE LAND OF SAND.
BUT I DIDN'T THINK YOU GUYS WOULD FLIP SIDES THIS FAST.


IT WAS JUST ORDERS.
IT'S NOT LIKE WE WANTED TO RAID KONOHA.


THE SAME WAY I WAS ORDERED HERE.


...


BY THE WAY...
ARE YOU GETTING DUMBER BY THE MINUTE?


THANK GOOD-NESS.
!
AHA... SO THE FIFTH HOKAGE SENT FOR HELP.

SO YOU WANNA PULL OUT AGAIN?
I CAN TAKE CARE OF HER, YOU KNOW.





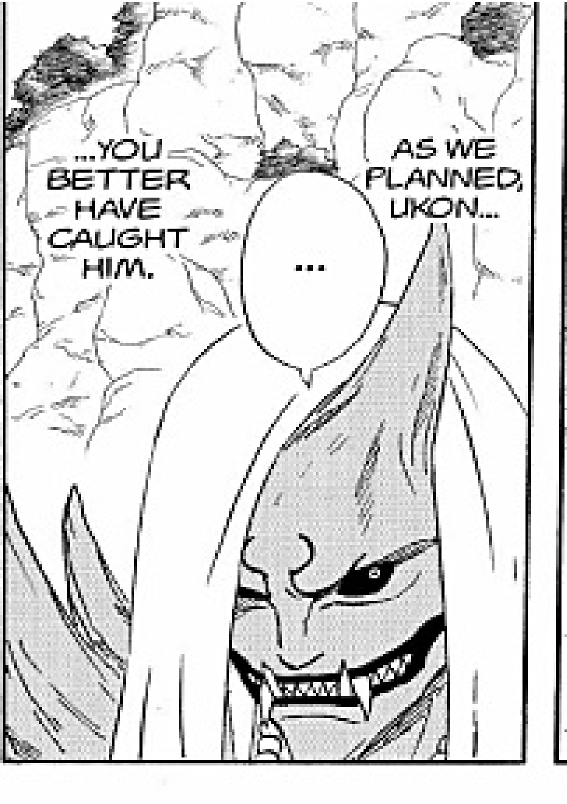






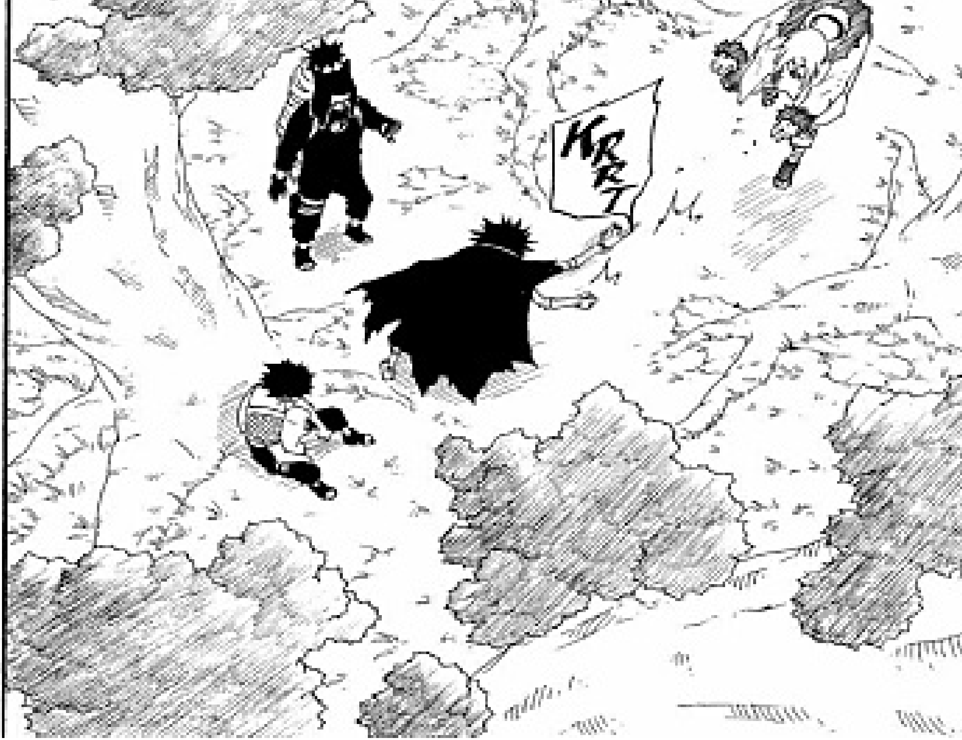

DAI-KAMAITACHI NO JUTSU! CYCLONE SCYTHE TECHNIQUE!!
SHWEEE


READ THIS WAY
!!
KWUUU
SLISH
IT'S NOT JUST BLASTING AWAY THE FLUTE SOUNDS... IT'S ALSO PHYSICALLY DAMAGING THE OPPONENT.
OFFENSE AND DEFENSE IN ONE MOVE.
SHE DOES HAVE SOME IMPRESSIVE JUTSU.
THIS WENCH IS GOING TO BE A PAIN IN THE NECK!!


AS WE PLANNED, UKON...
...
...YOU BETTER HAVE CAUGHT HIM.

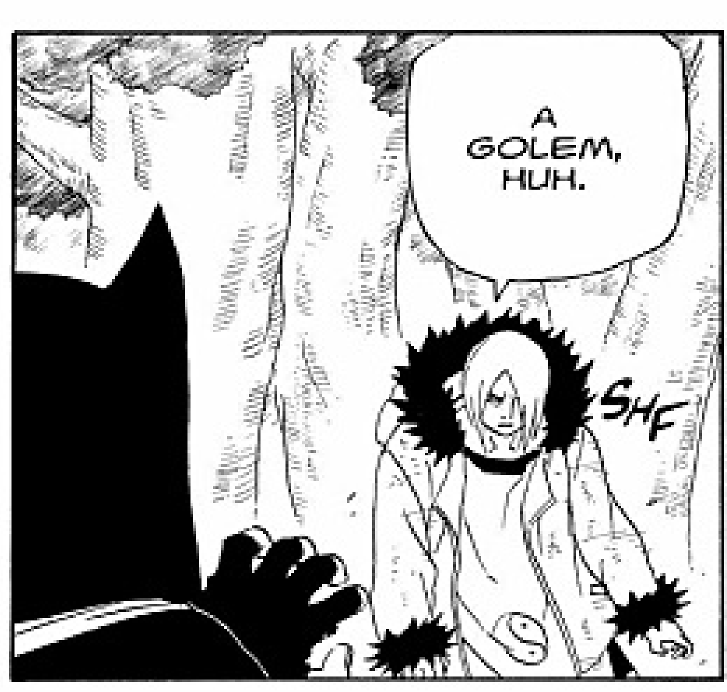

...


!!
SHOOM
FSSH


KRKT















BEHIND YOU!!

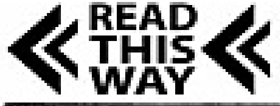
!

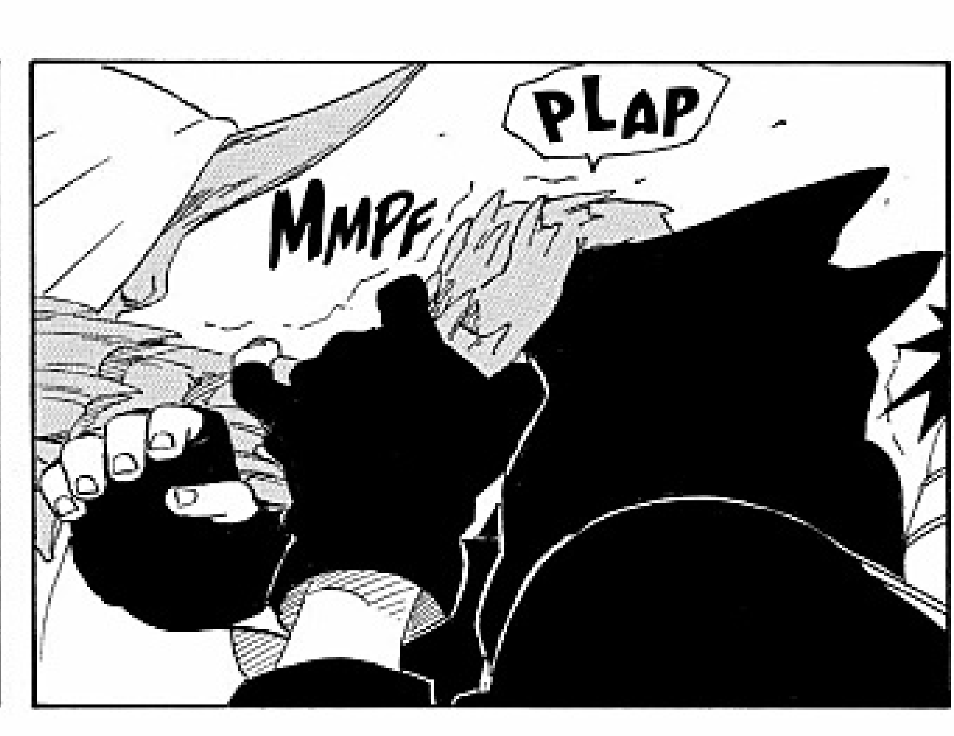
FWOOP

SPAK



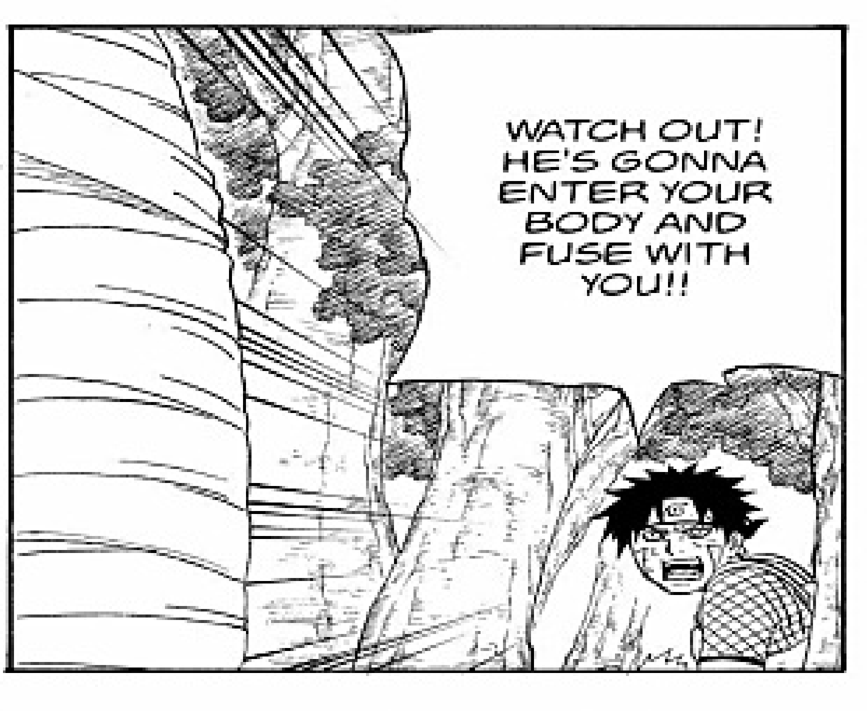



READ
THIS
WAY


PLAP
MMPF


SAKON, I'M LEAVING THEM IN YOUR HANDS.
FINISH THIS!


THAT POSITION...
!!


WATCH OUT! HE'S GONNA ENTER YOUR BODY AND FUSE WITH YOU!!


TOO LATE NOW...


SHUP

?!!


YIKES...
YOU!!


SMIRK

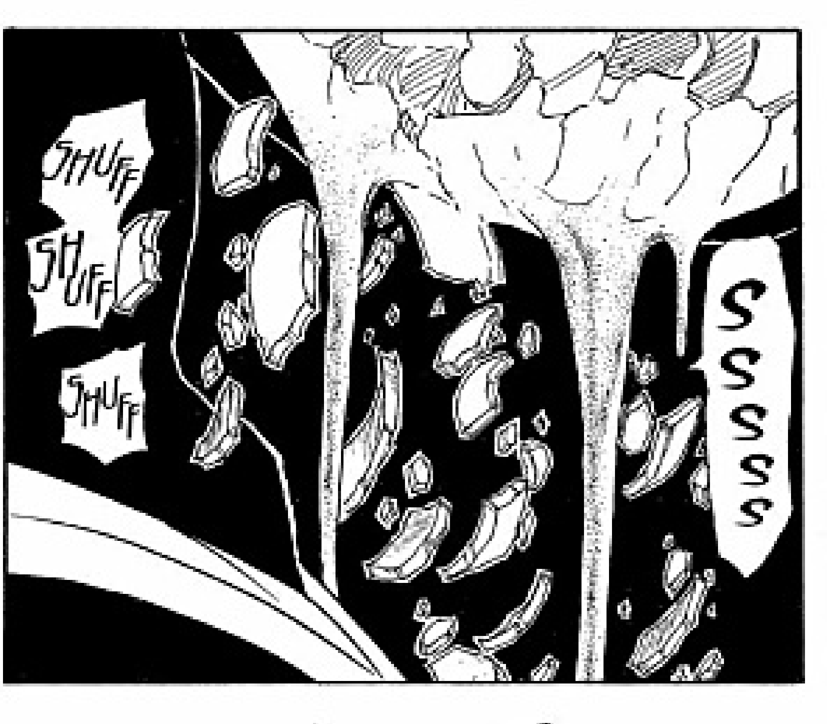

READ THIS WAY


?!


TAK

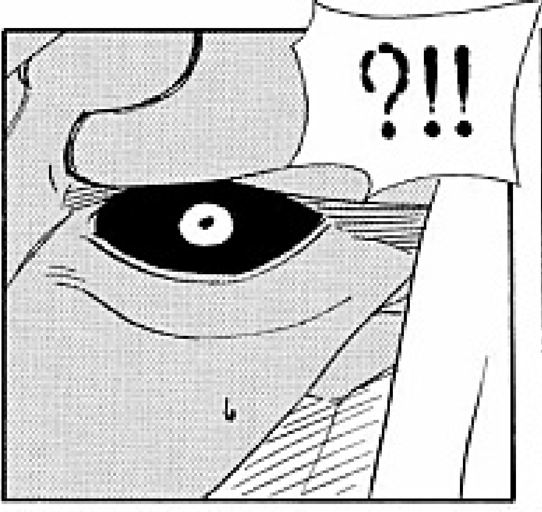

SAKON?! WHAT IS IT?!

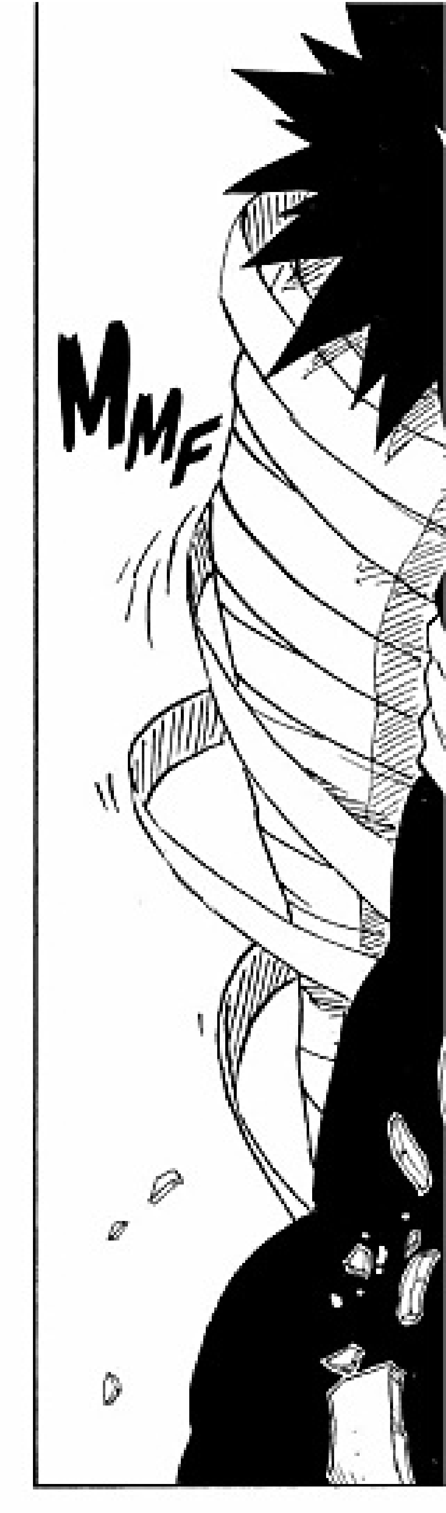

PLIK
PLIK


SSSSS
SHUFF
SHUFF
SHUFF


?!


?!


?!!


MMF


FWUP
LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING. SAND NINJA AREN'T SO EASILY BRUSHED ASIDE AS LEAF.

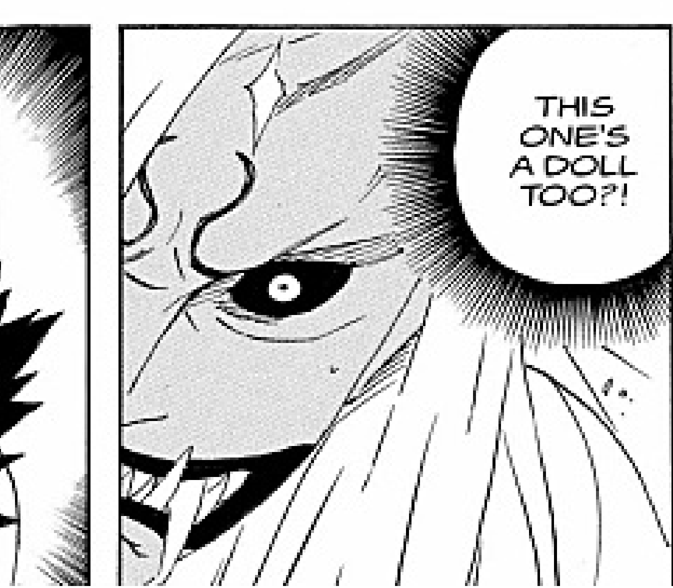

WOMP
IF YOU STRAY TOO CLOSE TO MY KUROARI, THE ANT...


YOU'RE IN A BIND.
SKLORSH
GWAH!!


?!


HE WAS A TERRIBLE ENEMY...
BUT NOW THAT HE'S WITH ME, I SURE AS HECK CAN COUNT ON HIM.

!!


THIS ONE'S A DOLL TOO?!


THIS JUTSU OF YOURS... GUESS IT DOESN'T WORK ON A DOLL.
SHRIP

THE WORLD OF KISHIMOTO MASASHI
PERSONAL HISTORY:
THE TOO-EMBARRASSING-TO-WRITE-ABOUT STORY, PART 3

THE MORE I ADD TO THIS PERSONAL HISTORY, THE MORE MISERY I RELIVE FROM MY EMBARRASSING PAST. I ASK MYSELF WHETHER I ONLY DREDGE UP ALL THESE STUPID MEMORIES OUT OF A COMPULSION TO FILL IN THE PAGES BETWEEN CHAPTERS. YET STILL I PERSIST. WELL, AT LEAST YOU CAN NEVER SAY I HELD BACK ON YOU AS AN ENTERTAINER.

THE THINGS I'M ABOUT TO DISCLOSE MAY GET A LITTLE INTENSE FOR SOME READERS. STILL, HERE WE GO.

THIS INCIDENT IS WEDGED IN MY BRAIN... IT WAS BACK IN KINDERGARTEN, THE DAY OF THE "POTATO DIGGING TOURNAMENT." THAT AUTUMN, THAT DAY, IN THE MIDST OF HARVESTING SEASON, JUST FOR THAT EVENT, OUR SCHOOL INVITED OUR FAMILIES TO JOIN US. KIDS, PARENTS, TEACHERS, ALL OF US GOT TOGETHER TO HARVEST THE SWEET POTATOES WE'D PLANTED AT A NEARBY FARM. IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, YOU SEE, KINDERGARTENS HOLD THESE HEARTWARMING COMMUNITY FUNCTIONS, INTENDED TO BRING KIDS, PARENTS, AND TEACHERS CLOSER TOGETHER.

I WAS DIGGING AWAY IN HIGH SPIRITS, TELLING MYSELF "I'LL FIND THE BIGGEST POTATO OF ALL, AND SURPRISE EVERYBODY!" AND THEN THERE IT WAS, A MONOLITH AMONGST POTATOES. IN MY DELIGHT, I STARTED DIGGING LIKE A STARVING MAN. MIND YOU, FOR ALL MY HASTE I WAS CAREFUL NOT TO BREAK THE ROOT. AND THEN THERE I WAS, CLUTCHING A GIANT POTATO.

IN UNISON, EVERYBODY SCREAMED: "WOW!!" AND "THAT'S HUGE!" AND SO ON. I WAS IN ANOTHER WORLD. SO THEN... I DON'T KNOW WHY I DID THIS, BUT I STARTED RUNNING AND ROLLING AROUND THE FIELD, GRASPING MY PRECIOUS POTATO. THEN THE THOUGHT HIT ME: "I GOTTA SHOW MOM THIS POTATO!" SO I GLANCED AROUND FOR HER AND REALIZED SHE WASN'T THERE. SHE WAS ACTUALLY DOWN AT MY TWIN BROTHER'S PLOT. SEE, THE FARM WAS TERRACED, AND HIS PLOT WAS IN A FIELD BELOW. SO I PELTED STRAIGHT TOWARD HER, SPRINTING FROM FIELD TO FIELD, HOPPING DOWN THE TERRACES AND EVERYTHING.

AND THAT'S WHEN IT HAPPENED. I WAS IN SUCH A HURRY I WASN'T LOOKING, BUT IN THE LOWER FIELD, IN THE FIVE SQUARE METER AREA WHERE I WAS DUE TO LAND, WAS A HEAPING PILE OF A TYPICAL RURAL ARTIFACT...

AS YOU MAY HAVE SURMISED, IT WAS, YES, A MOUNTAIN OF **COW MANURE**!

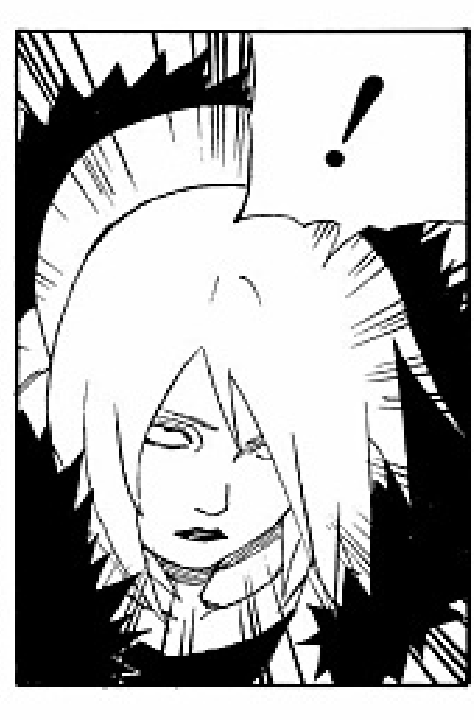
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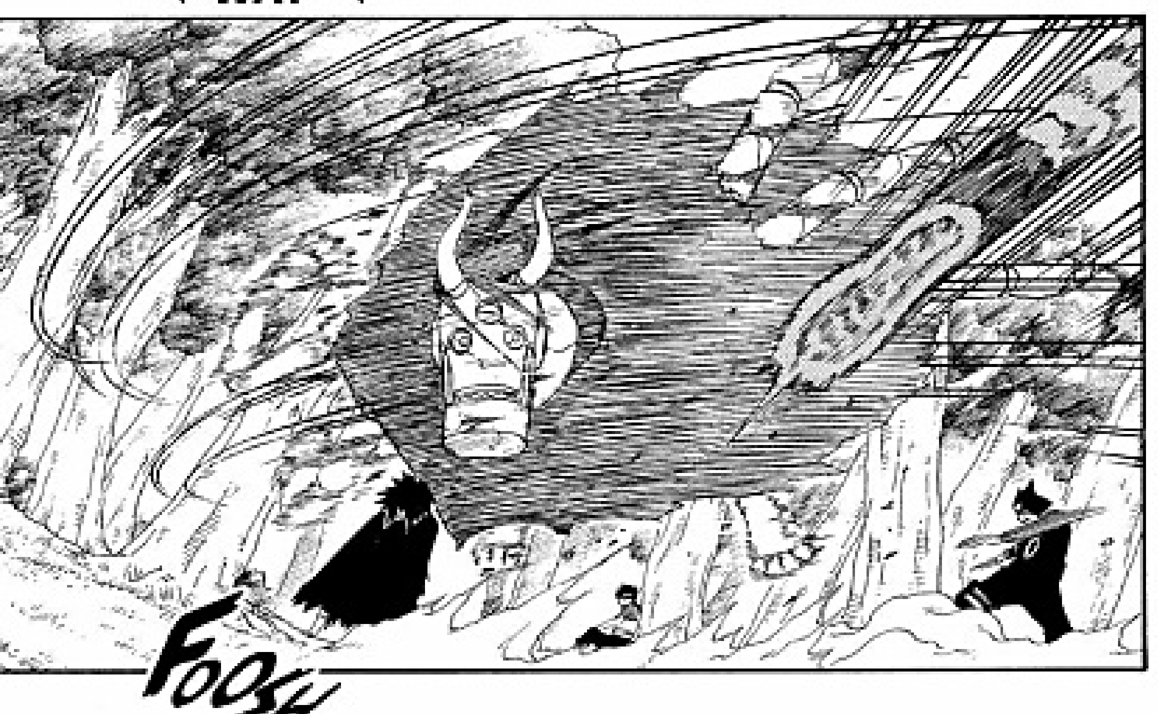

Number
214:
Retreat...!!



WHUMP
KAK
WOMP
SHAA
KNK

READ THIS WAY











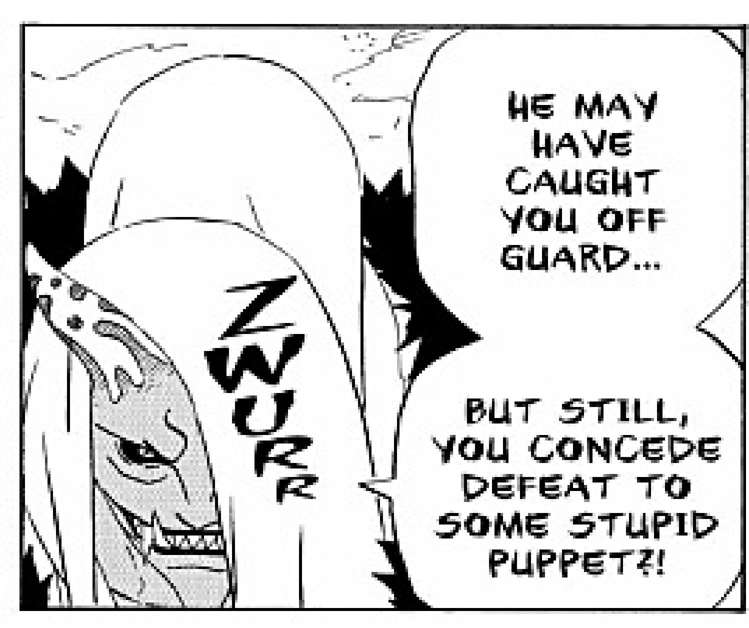


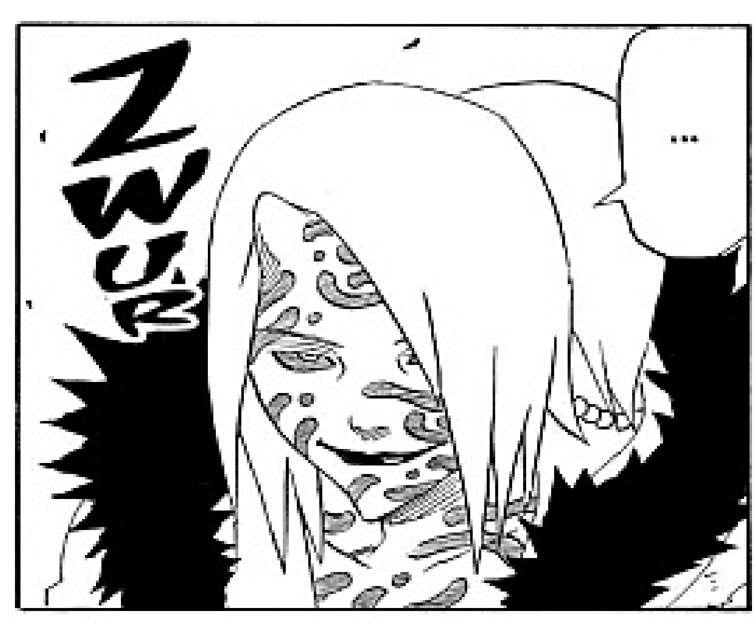





OWW...
SHRAK
I LET MY GUARD DOWN.
SLURGE
HERE, LEMME REST A BIT.
YOU'RE PATHETIC.
SLURR
SLURRR


WHAT'S WITH THEM?
THAT'S THEIR POWER.


HE MAY HAVE CAUGHT YOU OFF GUARD...
ZWURR
BUT STILL, YOU CONCEDE DEFEAT TO SOME STUPID PUPPET?!

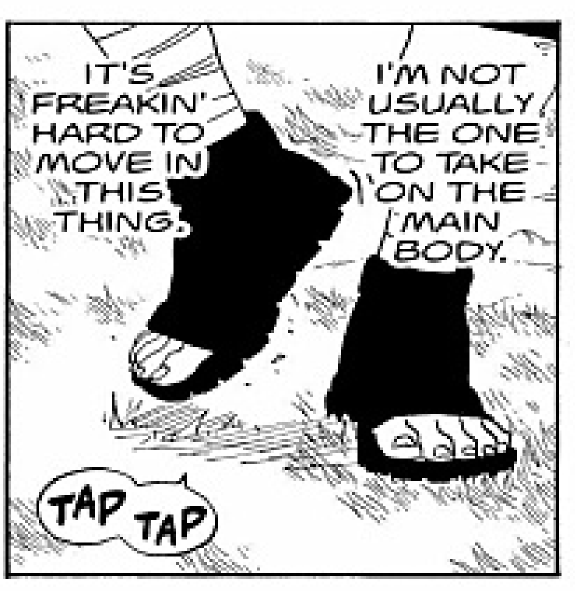

...
ZWUR

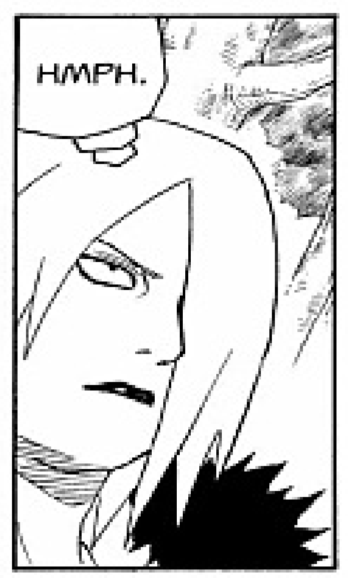

LOOK... HE'S NOT THAT STRONG, HE'S NOT THAT FAST...
THAT TOY'S NOT ENOUGH TO TAKE US DOWN.


...


HEH. MY STOMACH WOUND'S HEALED OVER.

I AM RUNNING LOW ON CHAKRA...
BUT I'VE GOT ENOUGH TO SHRED THESE TWO.


IT'S FREAKIN' HARD TO MOVE IN THIS THING.
I'M NOT USUALLY THE ONE TO TAKE ON THE MAIN BODY.
TAP TAP


HMPH.

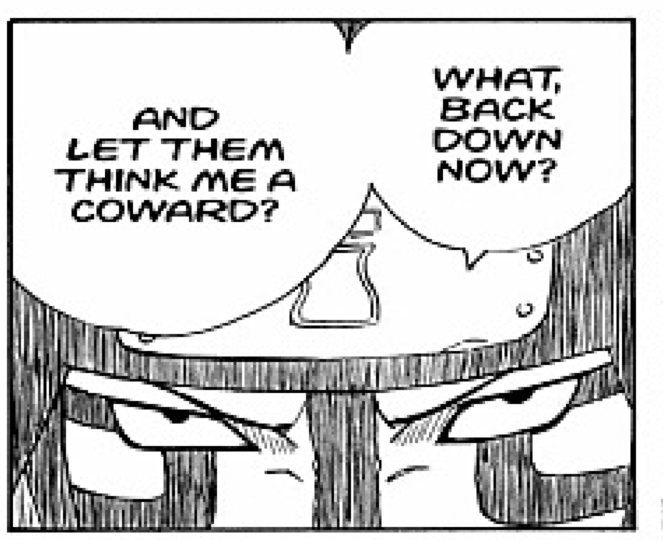

HOW FAST HE RECOVERS...!
LOOKS LIKE HIS WOUNDS HAVE HEALED.

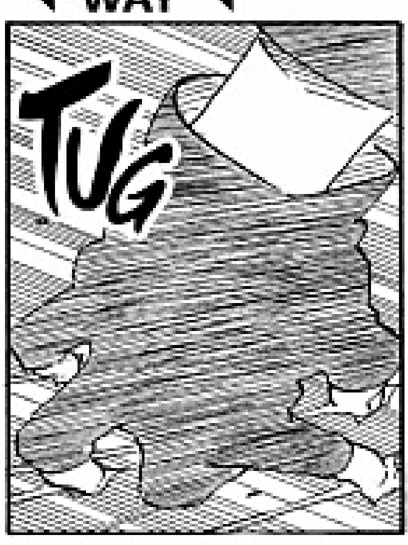

WE SHOULD RETREAT FOR NOW...
YOU CAN'T BEAT 'EM FIGHTING HEAD-ON!


YOU GUYS TAKE ME FOR A FOOL?
!









SHAAA

!!

SHKK

!

SHOM

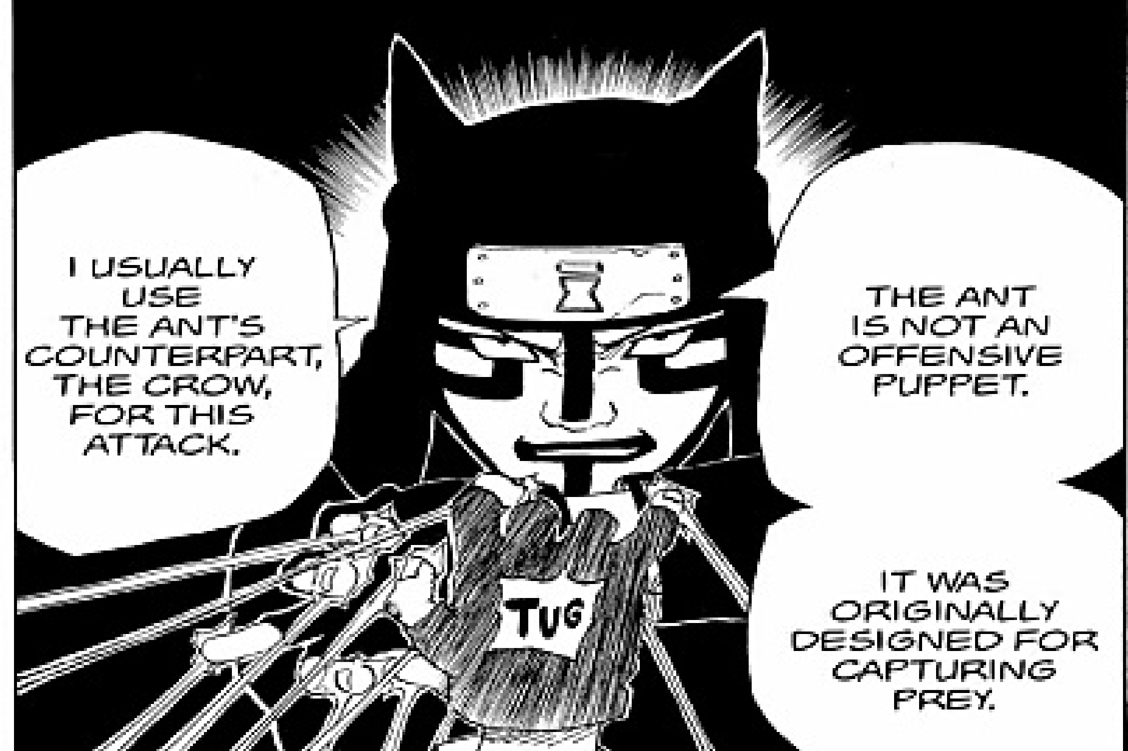
SHOM

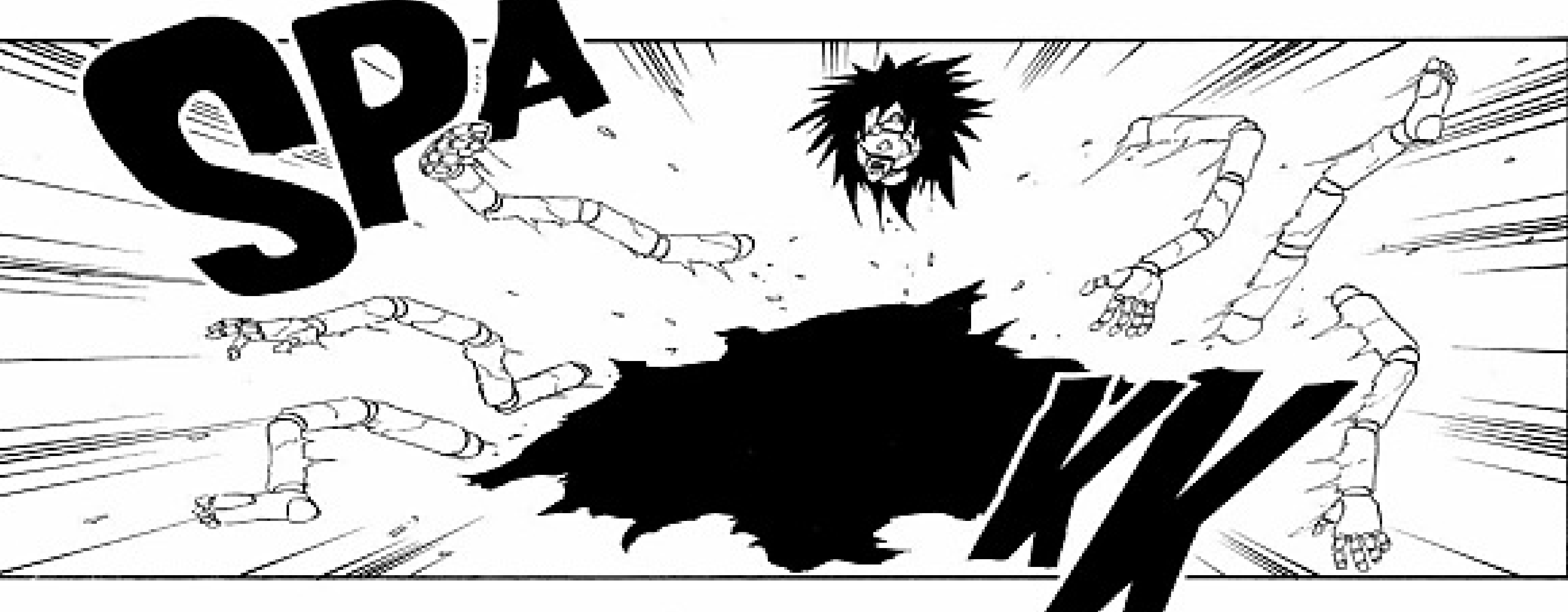
SHOM


URK!!


WHOA!!
BA
SHOOM
SHOOM
SHOOM


?!


THE ANT IS NOT AN OFFENSIVE PUPPET.
IT WAS ORIGINALLY DESIGNED FOR CAPTURING PREY.
TUG
I USUALLY USE THE ANT'S COUNTERPART, THE CROW, FOR THIS ATTACK.


SPAKK


K'SHAK
K'SHAK
K'SHAK


YEEG!



BAM
LET ME OUTTA HERE!!
I GIVE YOU...
...MY VERY OWN PUPPET SHOW!
WOMP
THE ART OF THE IRON MAIDEN!

READ THIS WAY

SHOOM

SHLUK

GLIK

CHUFF

...

SHLUK

CHUFF

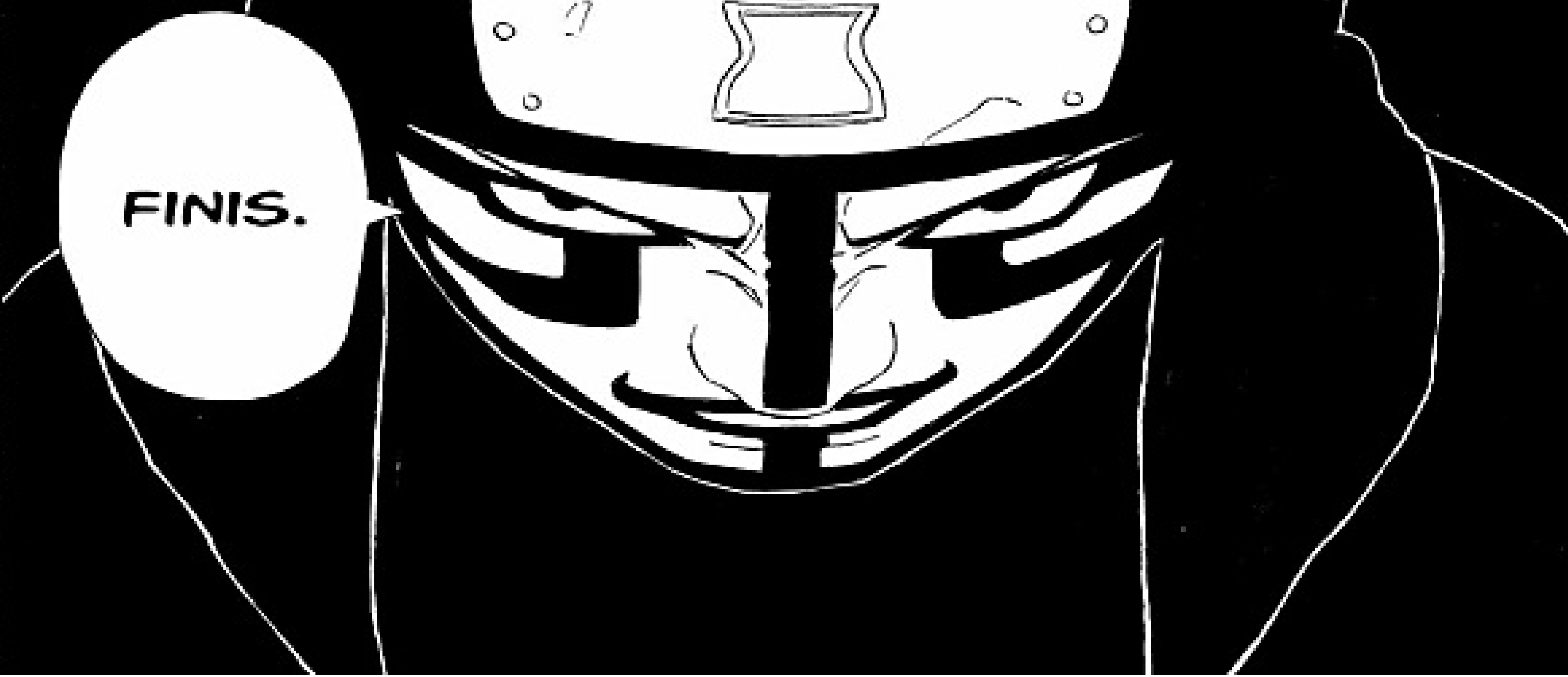
CHURK

GUH... GUAAAH!!

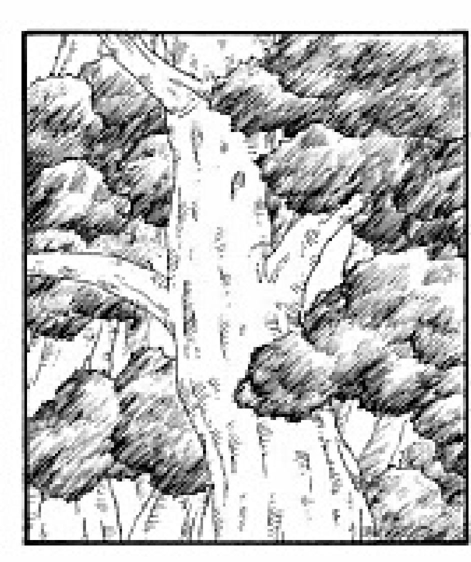
...

DRIP



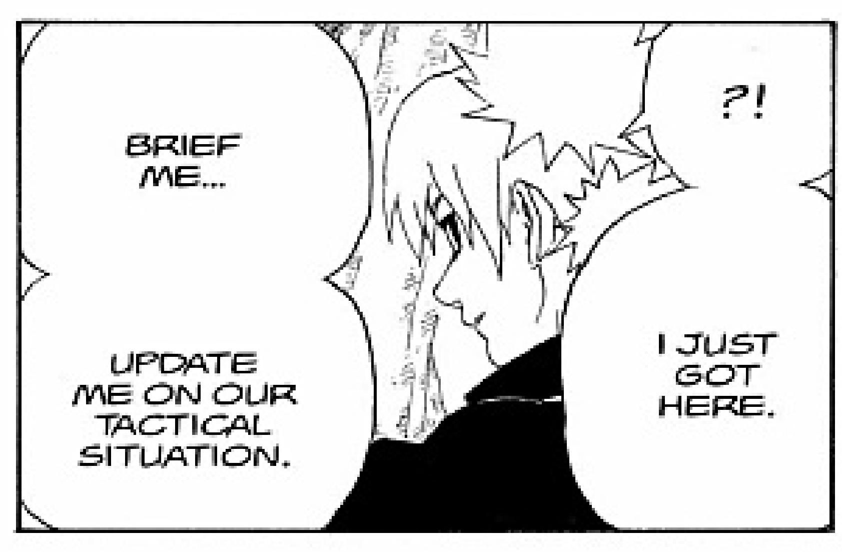

FINIS.

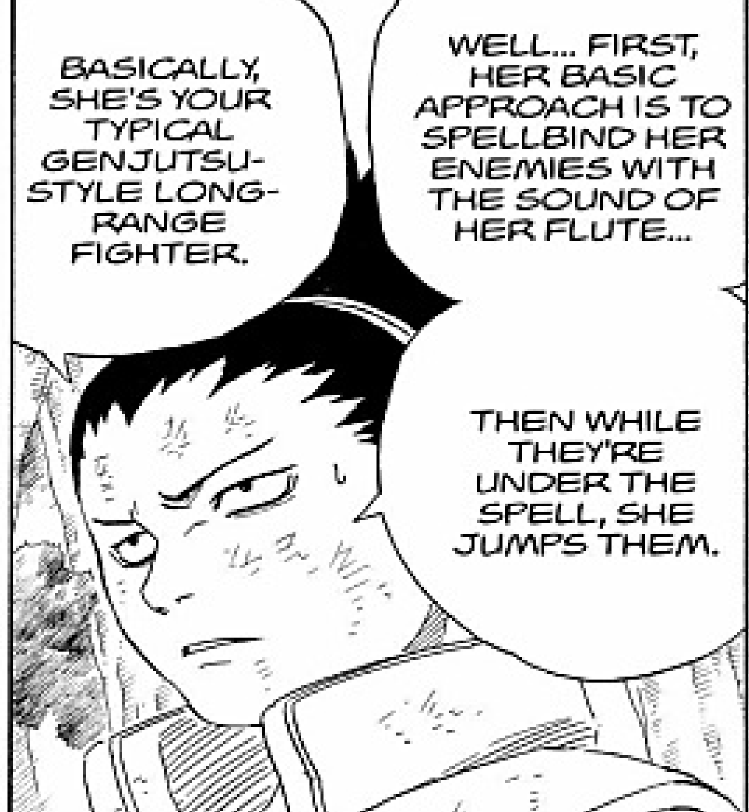

READ THIS WAY




SHE'S RUN OFF...
WITH HER TAIL BETWEEN HER LEGS?


NO...
THAT'S NOT HER WAY. SHE'S AROUND.

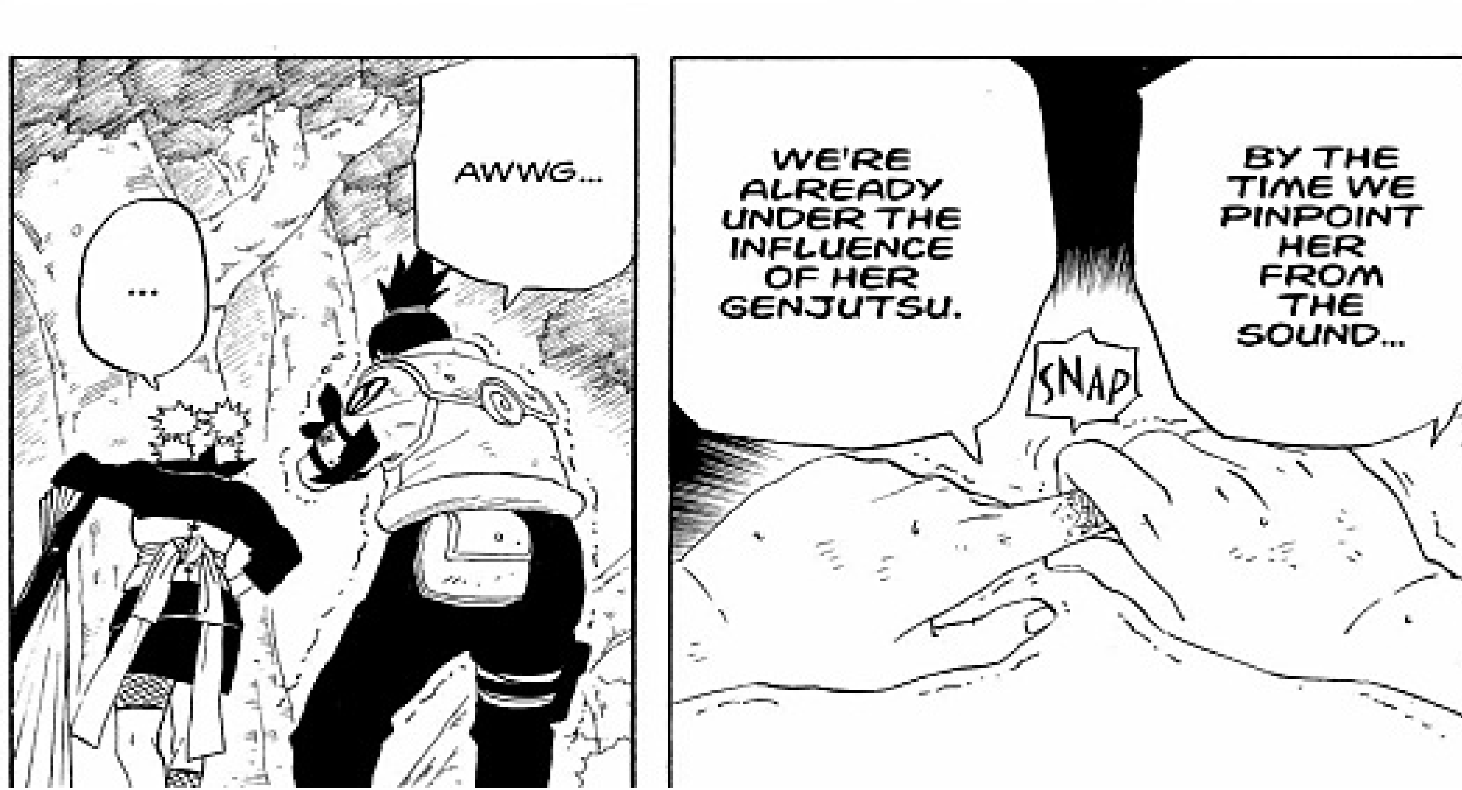

?!
I JUST GOT HERE.
BRIEF ME...
UPDATE ME ON OUR TACTICAL SITUATION.


WELL... FIRST, HER BASIC APPROACH IS TO SPELLBIND HER ENEMIES WITH THE SOUND OF HER FLUTE...
THEN WHILE THEY'RE UNDER THE SPELL, SHE JUMPS THEM.
BASICALLY, SHE'S YOUR TYPICAL GENJUTSU-STYLE LONG-RANGE FIGHTER.


I'M GUESSING SHE SAW IMMEDIATELY HOW POORLY HER JUTSU MEASURED UP TO YOURS.
THAT, AND IT'S TWO AGAINST ONE. SHE WON'T SHOW HERSELF UNTIL SHE CASTS HER GENJUTSU ON US.


SOUND... HUH?
YEAH.
SEE, MOST GENJUTSU WORK ON THE FIVE SENSES.
THEY ACT UPON AND BEWITCH YOUR SIGHT, YOUR HEARING...
... YOUR SMELL, TASTE, AND TOUCH.

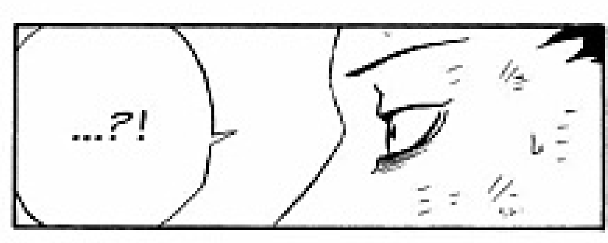

THE ONES BASED ON HEARING ARE THE MOST PROBLEMATIC.
NOT ONLY CAN SHE KEEP HER DISTANCE, BUT STAY AS CLOAKED AS SHE PLEASES.
WE'VE NO IDEA WHEN OR WHERE SHE'LL UNLOAD IT ON US.


BY THE TIME WE PINPOINT HER FROM THE SOUND...
WE'RE ALREADY UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF HER GENJUTSU.
SNAP
AWWG...
...

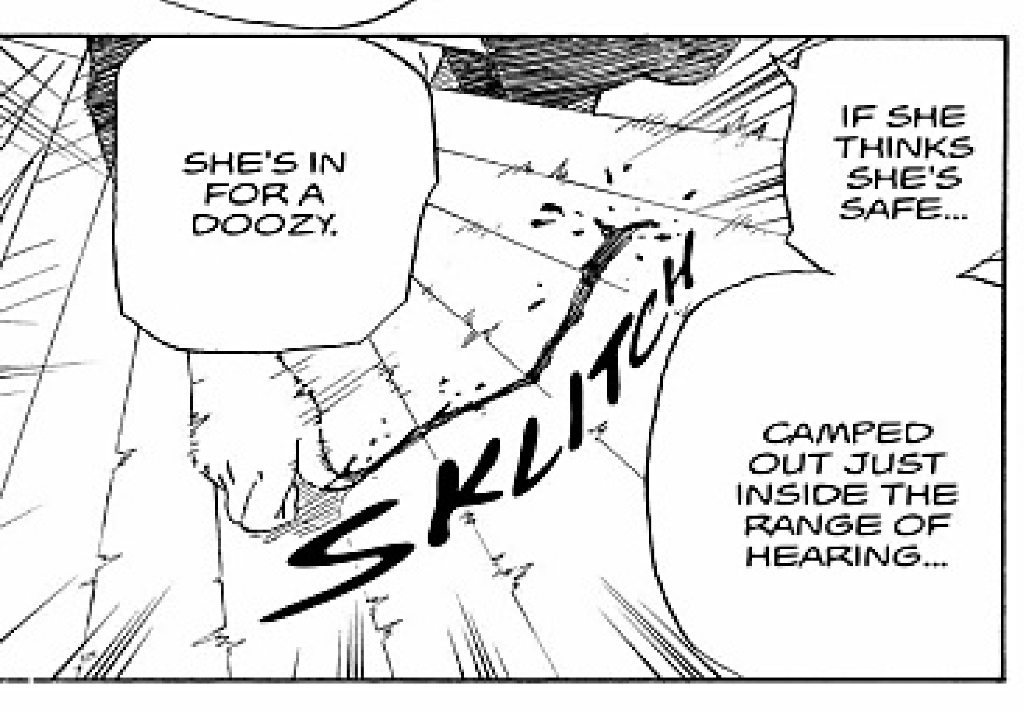

READ THIS WAY


WE'RE IN A HEAP OF TROUBLE, IF YOU ASK ME.
FACING SOMEONE LIKE HER IS FOOLISH WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF GUYS LIKE KIBA OR NEJI... SOMEONE WITH KEEN DETECTION.
THROB THROB

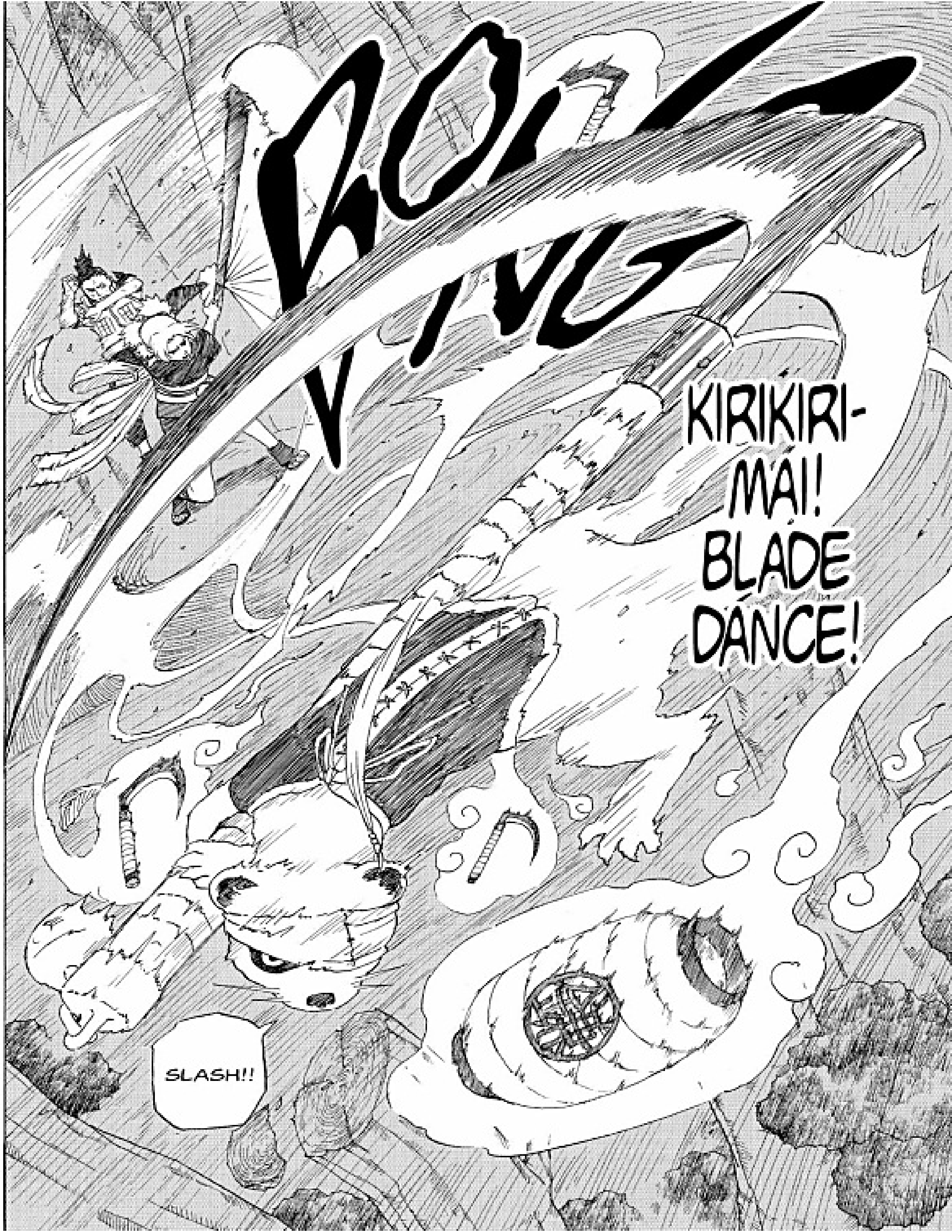

IF WE STAY HERE, SOONER OR LATER WE'LL BE CORNERED.
WE SHOULD RETREAT FOR NOW, AND...
DID ANYONE ASK YOU FOR ADVICE?!
I ASKED YOU THE SITUATION. THAT'S ALL.

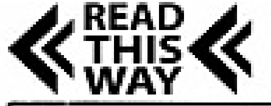

...?!


CHIP
DON'T UNDER-ESTIMATE ME.


IF SHE THINKS SHE'S SAFE...
CAMPED OUT JUST INSIDE THE RANGE OF HEARING...
SHE'S IN FOR A DOOZY.
SKLITCH


KUCHIYOSE! SUMMONING!
FWOSH


KIRIKIRI-MAI! BLADE DANCE!
SLASH!!

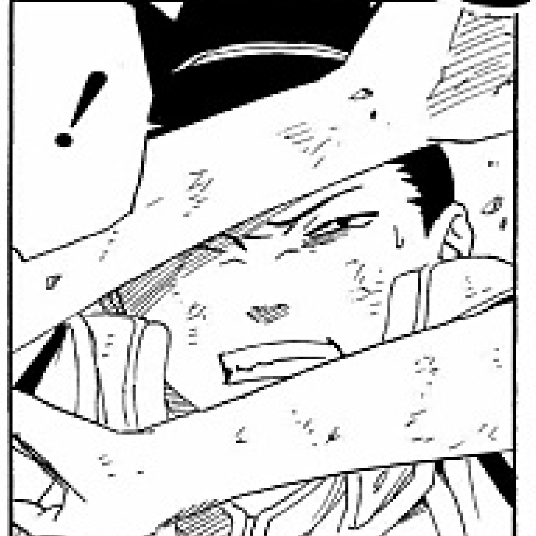


SHF
ALL RIGHT, FAR ENOUGH. LET THE GENJUTSU BEGIN...

WHAT?
!

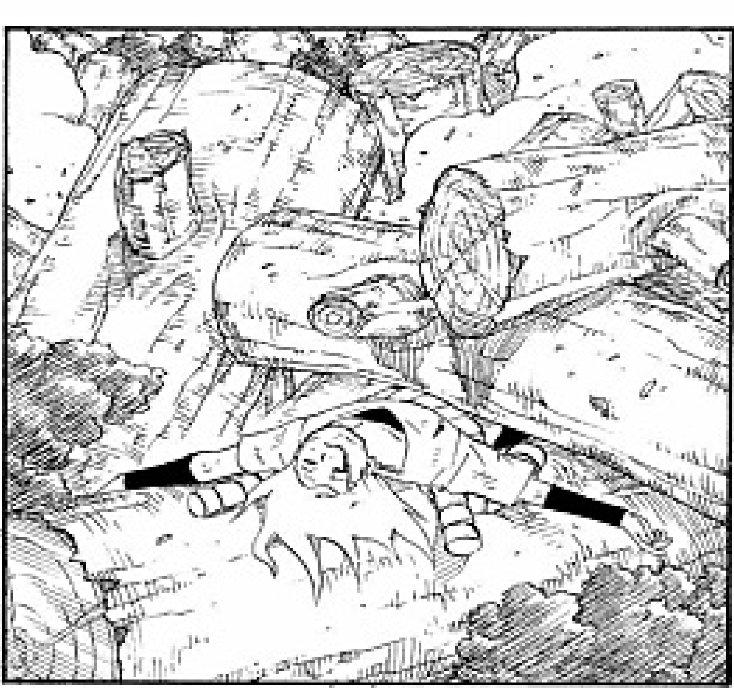
CHOK
CHOK











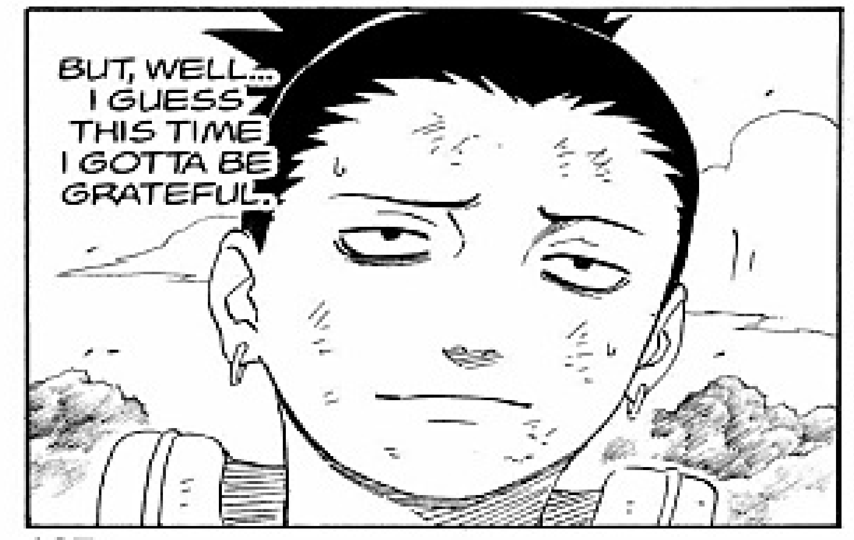




WHAT D'YA THINK?

TEE HEE





THE WORLD OF KISHIMOTO MASASHI
PERSONAL HISTORY:
THE TOO-EMBARRASSING-TO-WRITE-ABOUT STORY, PART 4

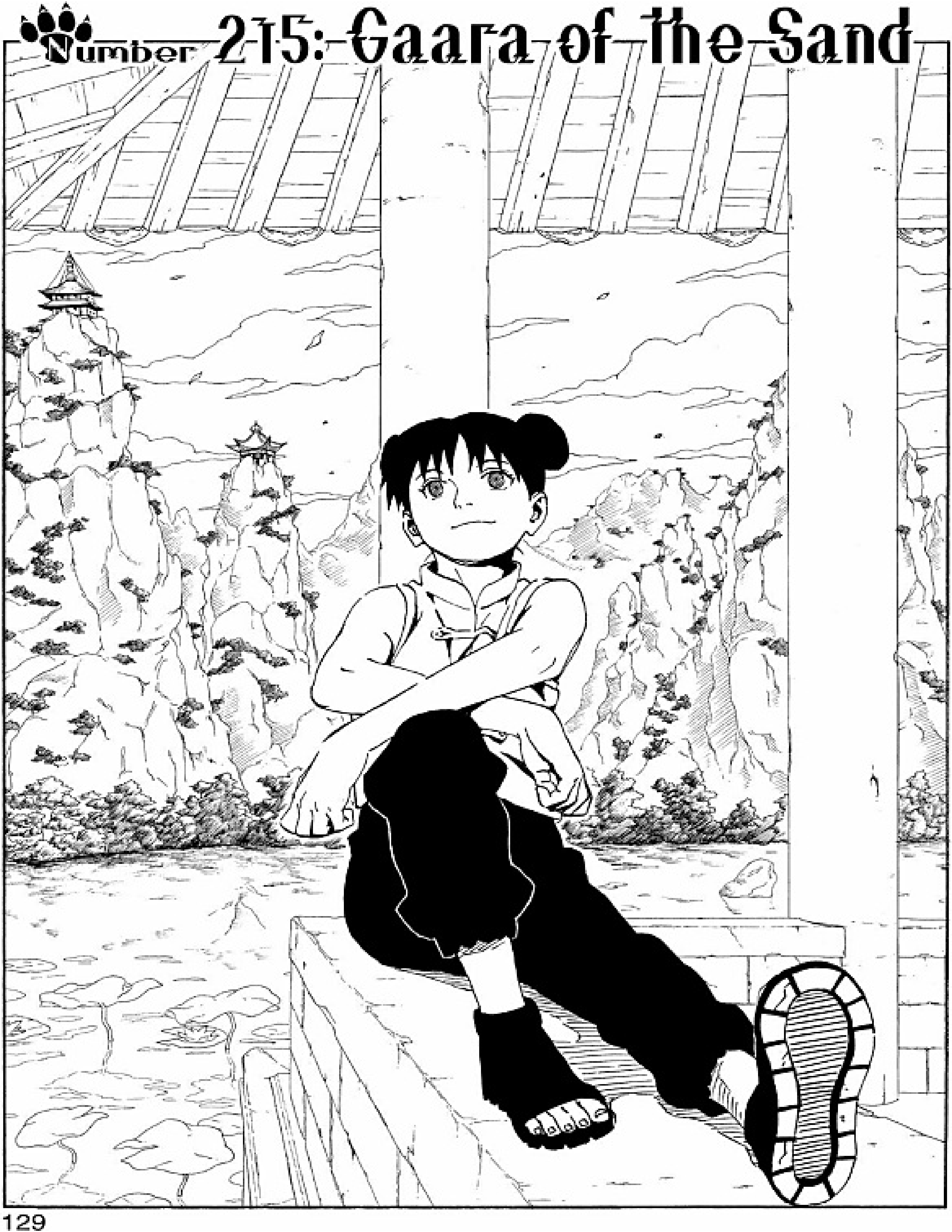
THE IMAGE OF THAT SCENE IS ACID-ETCHED INTO MY MIND. I REMEMBER MY THOUGHTS, HOVERING THERE IN MIDAIR. WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF I LOST MY BALANCE? OH NO. DON'T LET ME FALL DOWN. THAT'S IT, FORGET THE LEGS. IF I JUST LAND WITH MY UPPER BODY STRAIGHT, LIKE A GYMNAST...

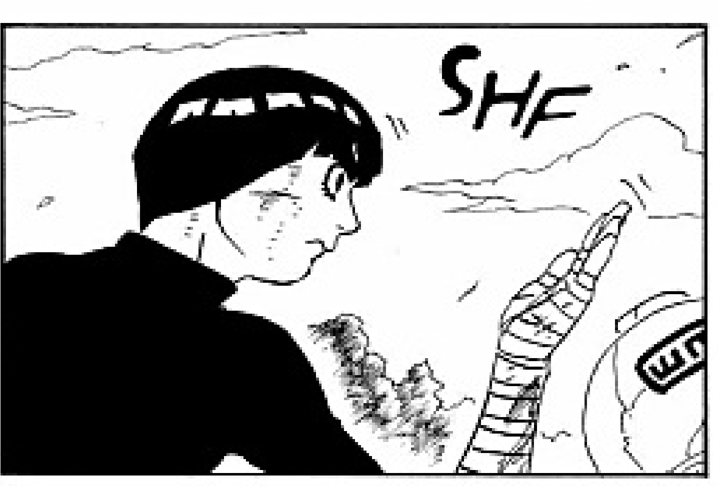
ANYWAY, NEVER MIND THE POTATO. I TOSSED IT ASIDE. **SQUELCH**. IT HIT THE MOUND FIRST. HEARING THAT SOUND GAVE ME THE RESOLVE I NEEDED. **SQUISH SMUSSH!** BOTH MY LEGS, PLANTED IN THE DUNG! IT WAS DEEPER THAN I HAD ENVISIONED. BUT ACTUALLY, THAT WAS A GODSEND. CEMENTED KNEE-DEEP, I MANAGED TO MAINTAIN MY BALANCE.

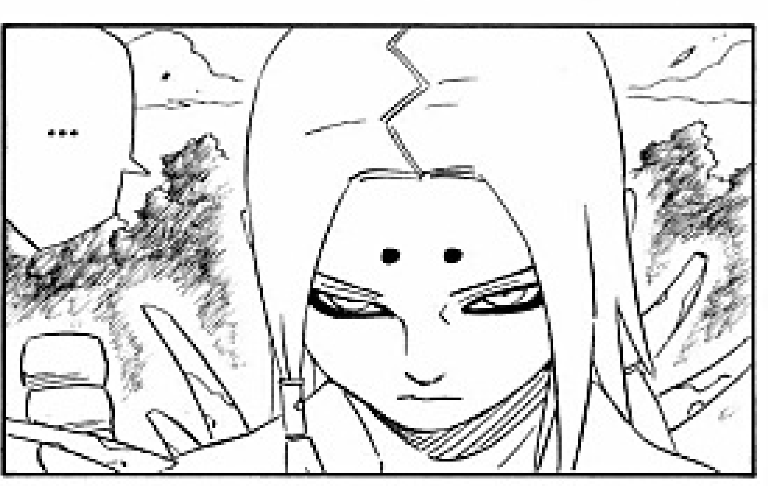
INSTEAD OF SURPRISING EVERYBODY WITH MY PRIZE POTATO, I WOUND UP STIRRING THEM IN A DIFFERENT WAY.

AND THEN CAME THE MISERY. I CALLED TO A NEARBY CLASSMATE FOR HELP. HE RAN TO THE NEAREST TEACHER, SCREAMING FULL BLAST: "MASASHI'S BURIED IN POO!" I'LL NEVER FORGET WHAT HAPPENED NEXT... THE TEACHER REFUSED TO HELP ME. I GUESS SHE WAS AVERSE TO RURAL ARTIFACTS. TO MY RELIEF AND HER CREDIT, MY MOTHER THEN CAME TO THE RESCUE, LIFTING ME OUT OF MY PREDICAMENT WITHOUT HESITATION. IN THAT MOMENT I LEARNED AWE FOR THE LOVE OF A MOTHER.

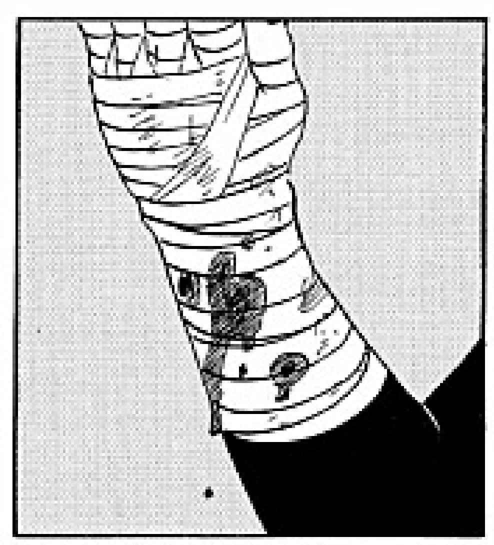
TO THIS DAY WHEN A YAM CROSSES MY PATH, IT BRINGS ME BACK TO THAT EVENT. AND NOW THE MORAL (IN TWO PARTS): NO GOOD EVER COMES FROM BEING CAUGHT UP WITH THINGS; AND WHEN IT COMES TO IT, MOTHERS ARE BRAVE!


Number 215: Gaara of the Sand


SHF


...

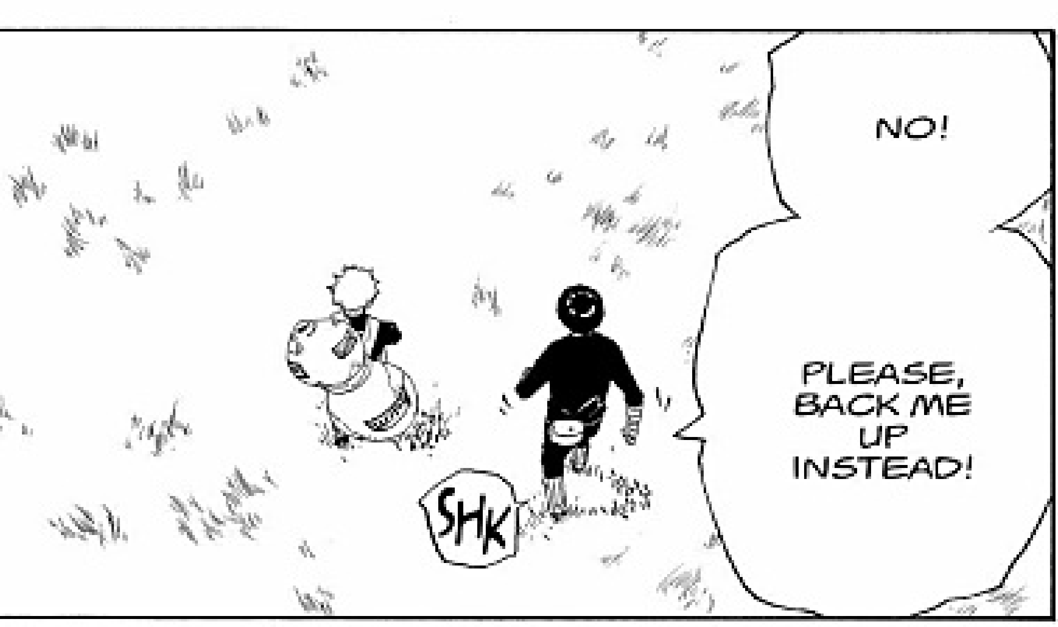

DRJP



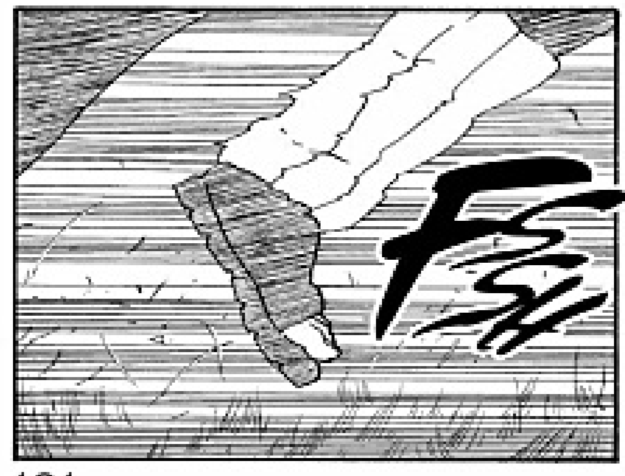


I'LL HANDLE THIS.
!


...
KWAH


NO!
PLEASE, BACK ME UP INSTEAD!
SHK


SHK
...


FSSH

...

ARGH!!

FLOMP

SWUP







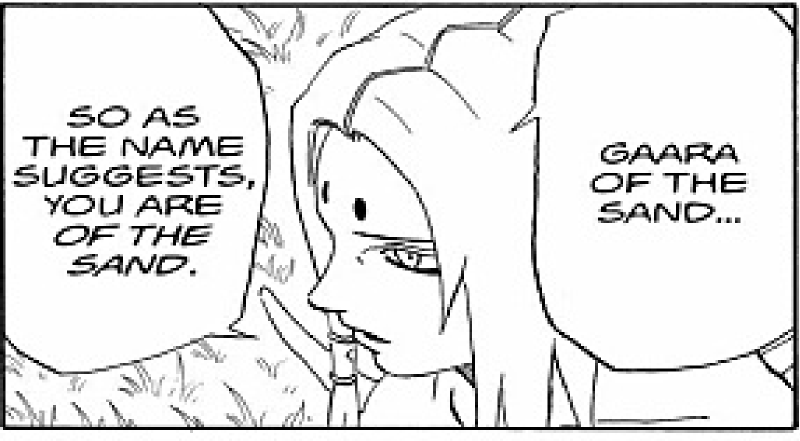
SSS

!

SHK

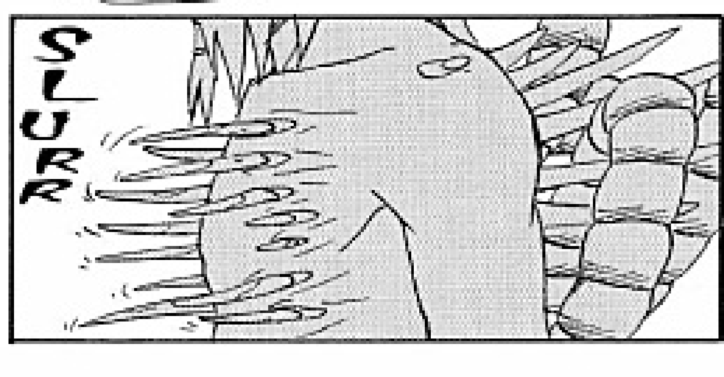
I'LL HANDLE THIS.

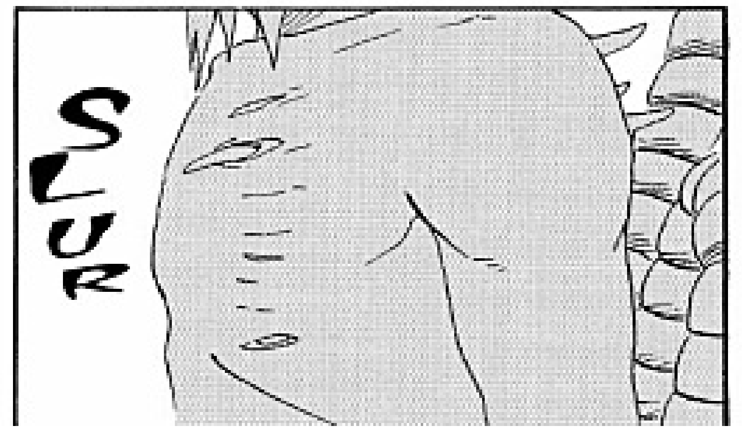
SHK

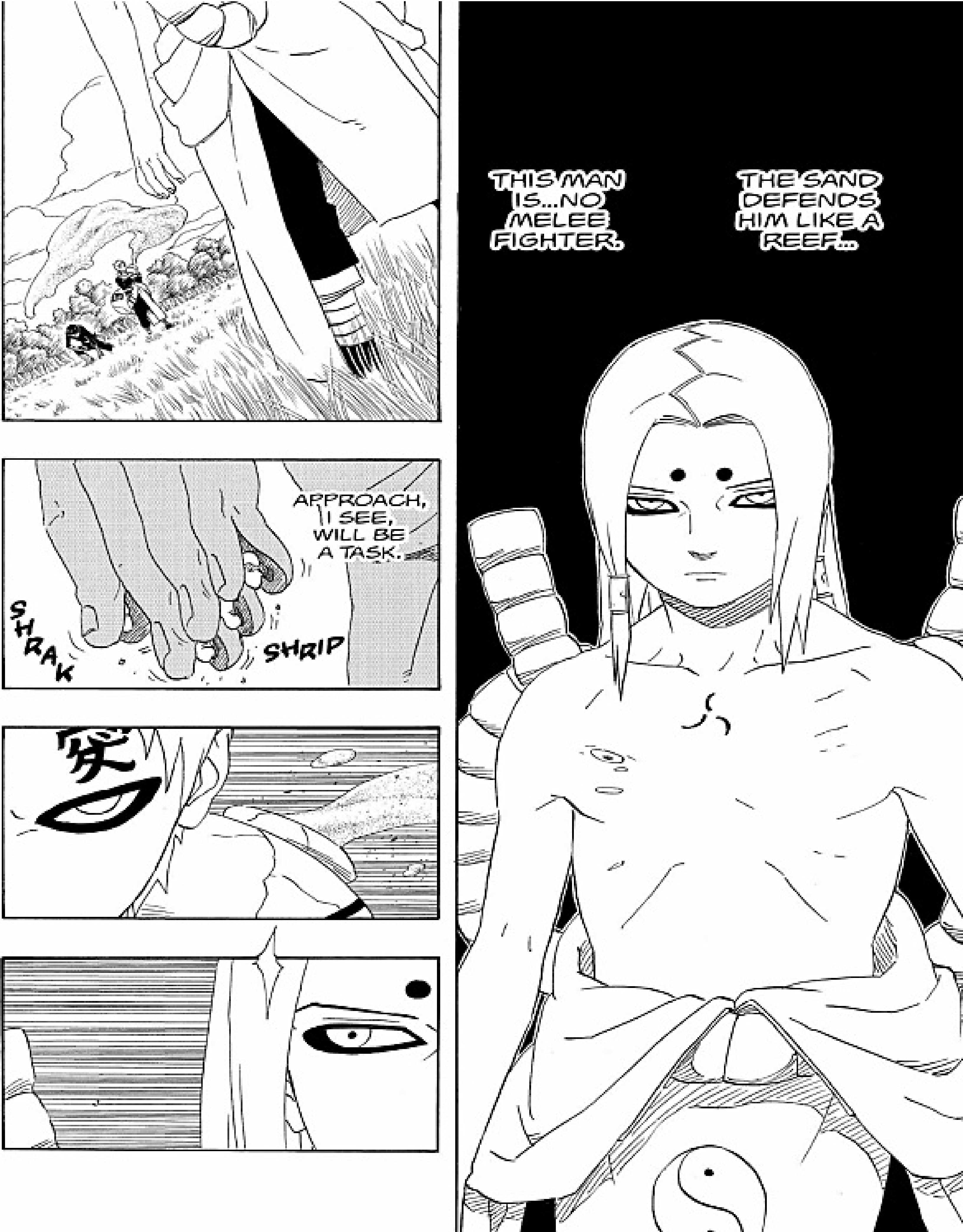










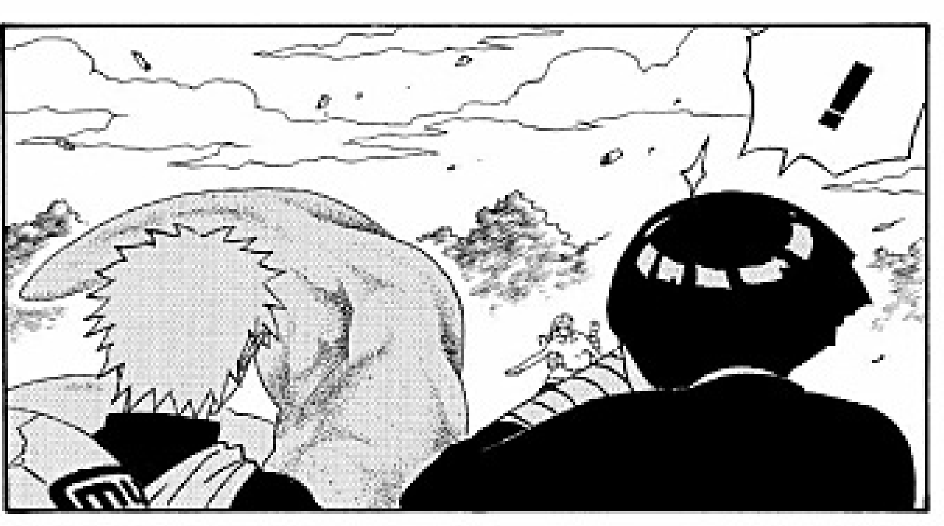

THE SAND DEFENDS HIM LIKE A REEF...
THIS MAN IS...NO MELEE FIGHTER.
APPROACH, I SEE, WILL BE A TASK.
SHRIP
SHRAK
突



READ THIS WAY
TUP
FWOOSH
!

KRAK


HE'S A MASTER.
THERE'S NO WASTE TO HIS MOVEMENT.
!!


!

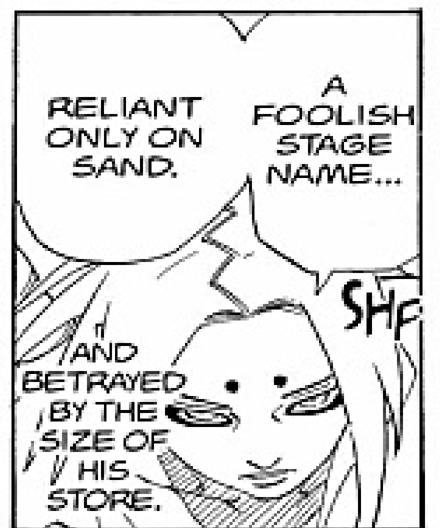

FSSH


TUP


WOOP
SHOOM

WOOM
SH
TAK
TAK
TAK





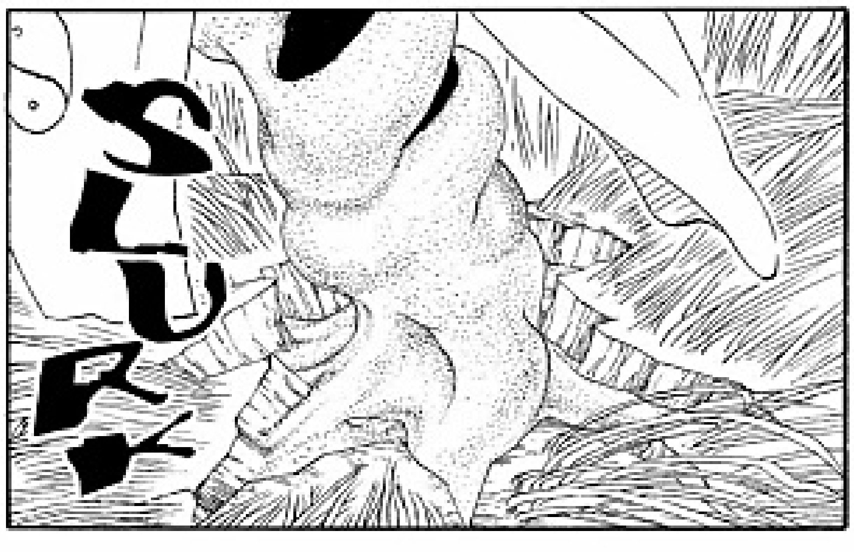


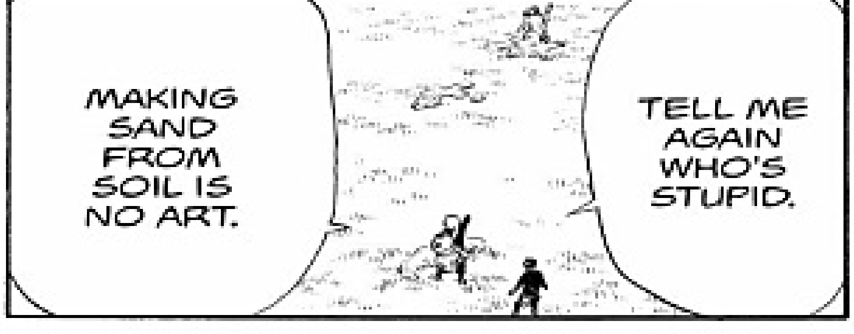
CHUUSSH
!
WHAT A ONE-TRICK PONY.


?!
SHISH
SHISH
SO LONG AS I HAVE SAND...
I CAN DO ANYTHING.
SHF
...!

PAK PAK PAK PAK PAK PAK

!!

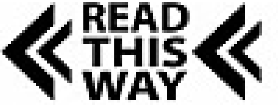




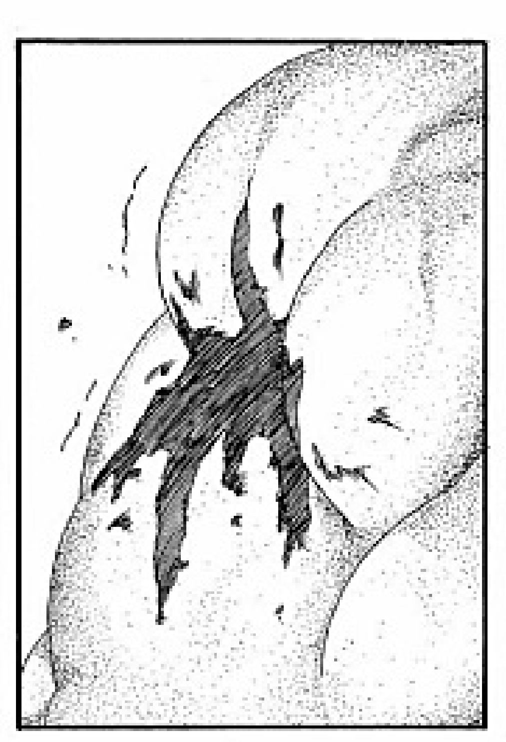





SABAKU-SÔSÔ! IMPLODING SAND FUNERAL!!
RIK
SPUK
SPUK
SPUK
SPUK


READ THIS WAY


...
愛




PUM PUM


SHLURRK


!

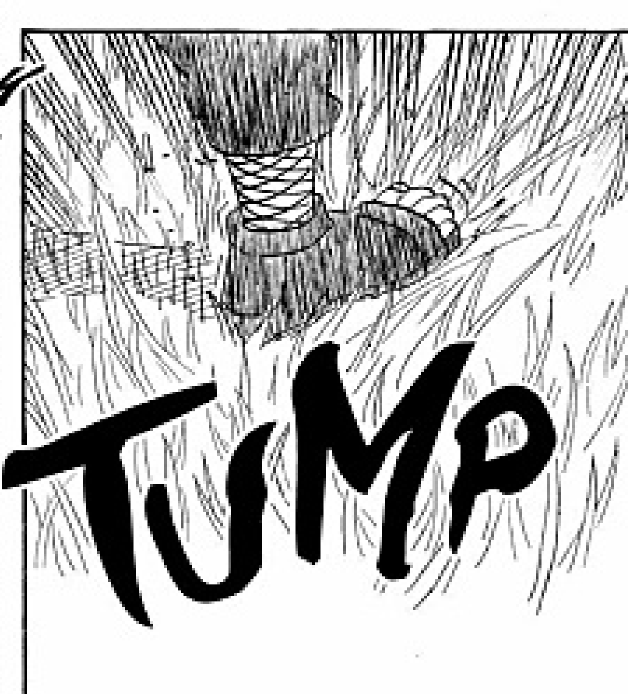

SLURK


MMF


MORE BONES, HUH? HE'S A REAL FREAK, ISN'T HE...
HE'S CERTAINLY A NUISANCE.


THAT PRES-SURE WAS A FEAT.
WITHOUT THIS LAYER I CREATED UNDERNEATH MY SKIN, I WOULD HAVE BEEN DEAD MEAT FOR SURE.


I UNDERES-TIMATED YOU...
AND YET YOUR SAND WON'T HOLD ME TWICE.


TUMP


SHRK SHRK
SHRK
SHRK SHRK

!
BOFF
BOFF
FWIP
BOFF
BOFF
BOFF
RYÛSA BAKURYÛ!
SAND TSUNAMI!!
?!
SHA
FOOF


GAH!!
SWASH
HSSS
SWSS
SWORSH


HOOSH
!!

SWASSH





SABAKU TAISÔ! TOTAL SAND FUNERAL!!

SHAKUNK

WHOA...!


...


WOW... WHAT A GUY...
HE'S EVEN STRONGER THAN WHEN I FOUGHT HIM...


WON'T HE EVER GIVE UP?
HUH?!


...?!

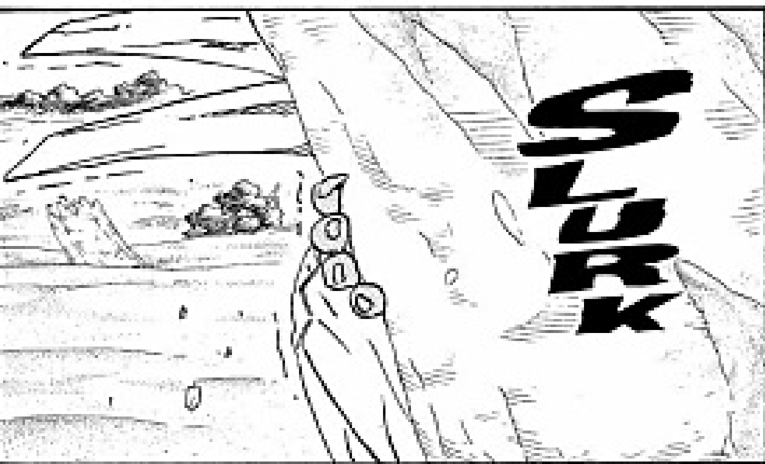
SLURK

SLURK




Number 216: Halberd and Shield...!!
愛

SLURK









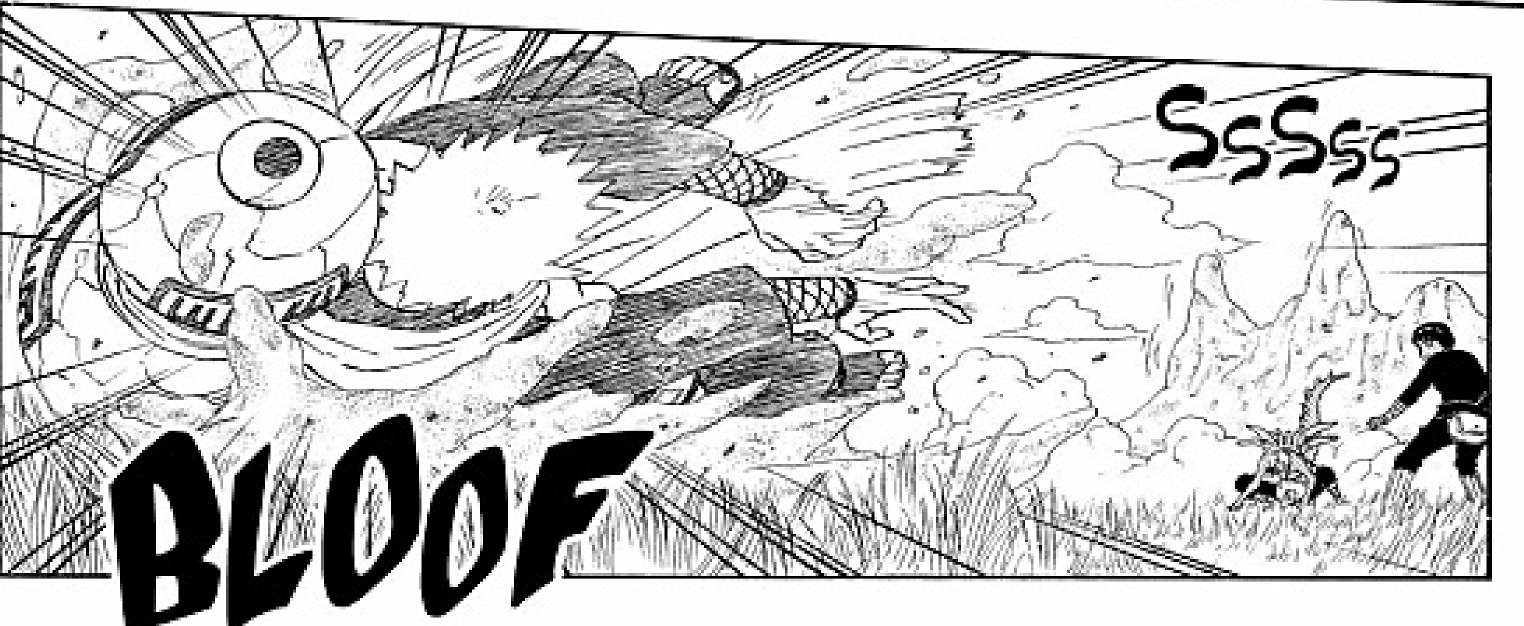



READ THIS WAY
SW UK
PFAF
SABAKUKYÛ! THE COFFIN OF CRUSHING SAND!
TRIK
TUMP
SLURR
SKUSH
KRUP
MMF
SKASHOOSH
SPAP
THOP
TAK TAK


SHA


ZWOO
?!!
WHAT IS THAT FORM?!
BAFF
SHUNK
PFOOF

SWISH
!!


SSSSS
BLOOF


PLIK
PLIK


...!

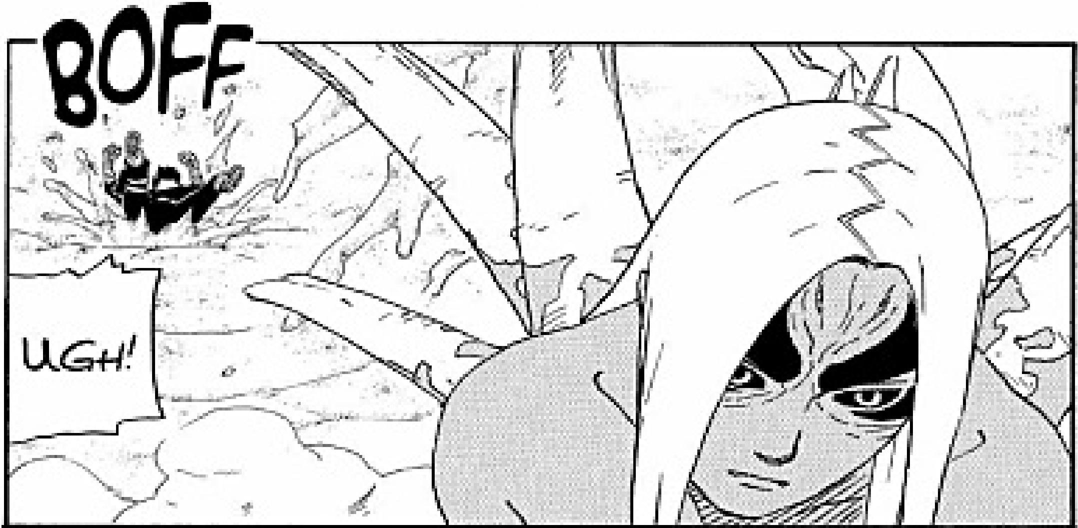

RRG...
...!


IS THIS ALL THERE IS TO YOUR SO-CALLED TOTAL DEFENSE?
WHAT A JOKE.


I SEE...
SO YOU COAT YOURSELF WITH SAND...
!
FSSH
HE'S NOT YOUR ONLY OPPONENT!
I'M HERE TOO!!
KA
POW
!
!
KWAH
!!
PFOOF

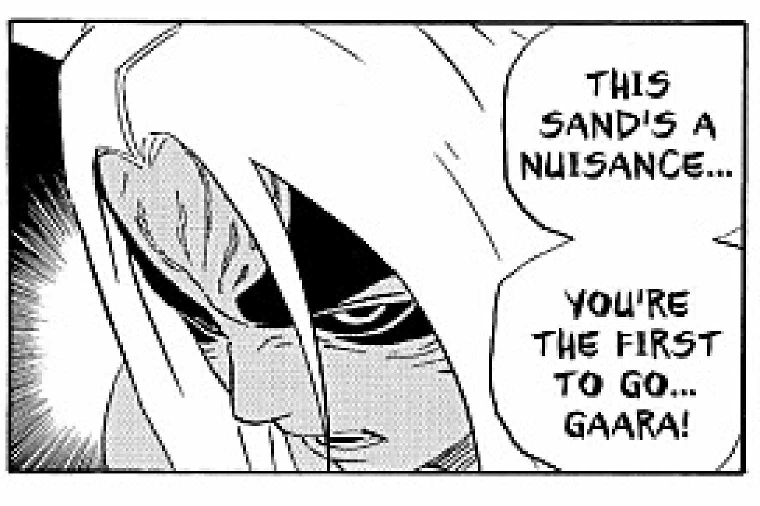
SPONG

WHOA!!

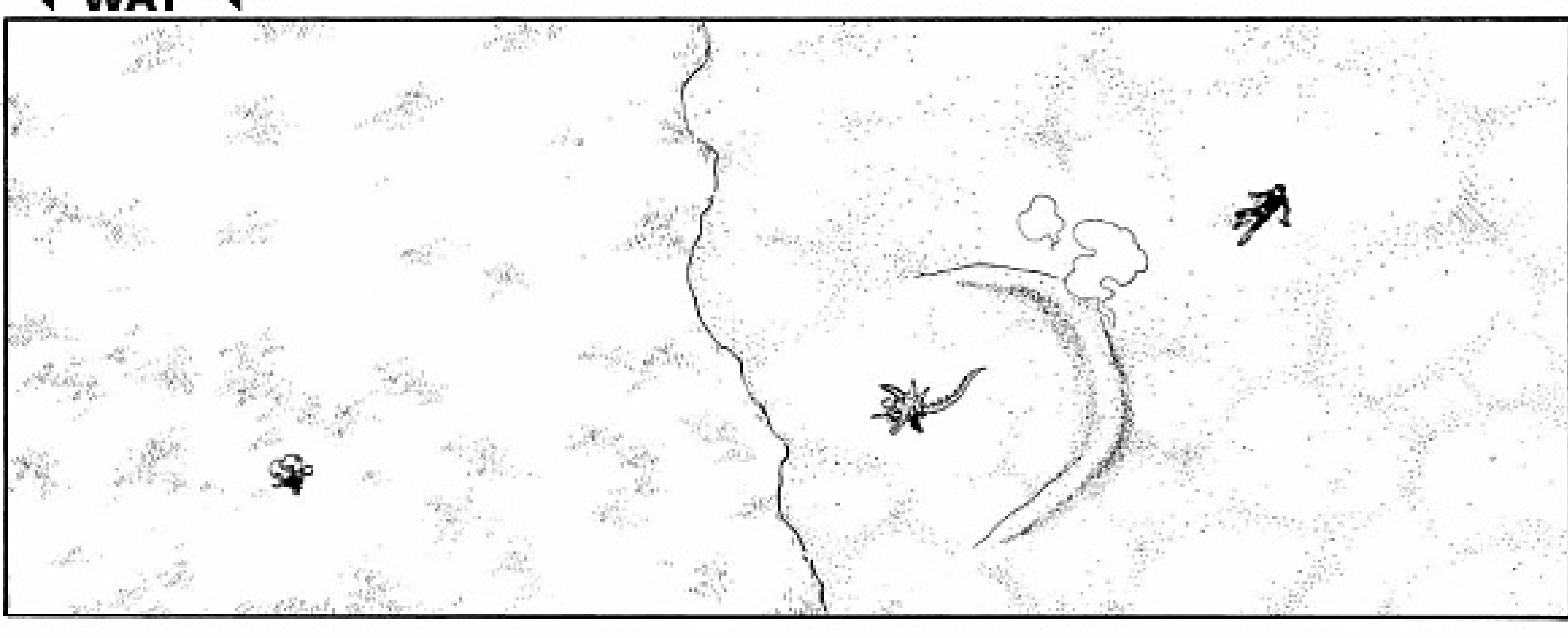

BOFF
UGH!

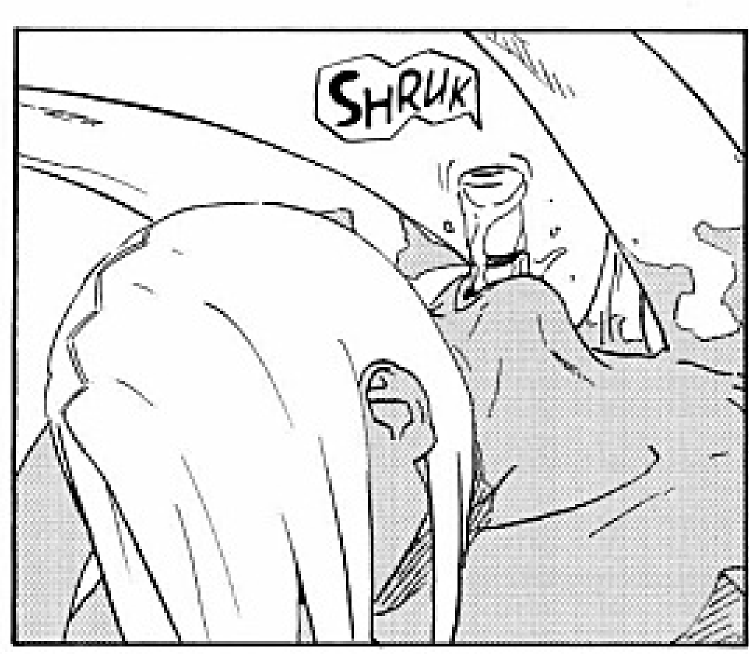

...


THROB
URG...
MY BODY'S STILL... I'LL ONLY GET IN THE WAY...


THIS SAND'S A NUISANCE...
YOU'RE THE FIRST TO GO... GAARA!


READ THIS WAY



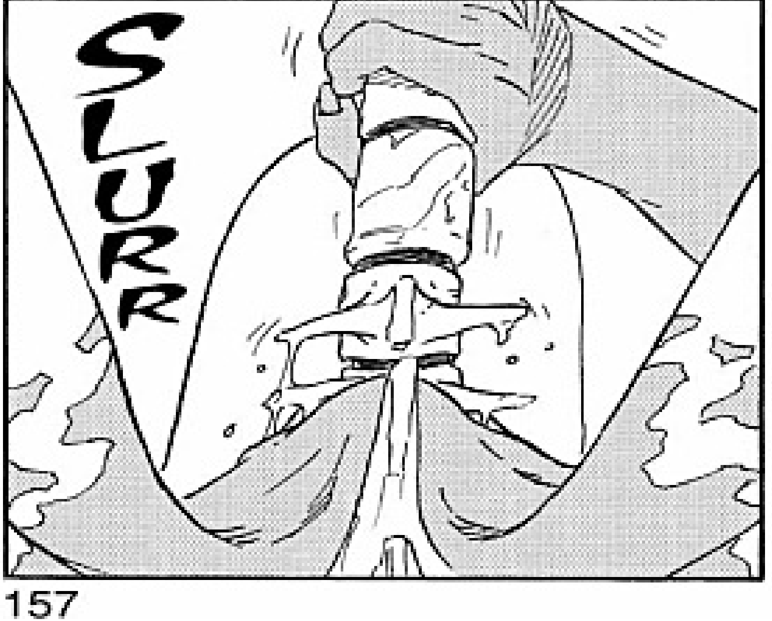

SHRUK


SPUP


SLUR


...!


!


SLURR


SLURRGE
TESSENKA NO MAI! IRON FLOWER DANCE!!

DID HE JUST PULL OUT HIS... SPINE?!

VINE!

SHAA

PFOOF

SKRAK

SNAP

K-PAK

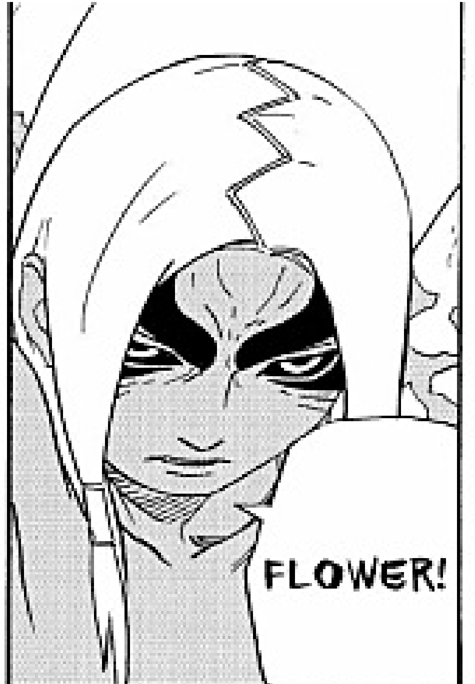
POFF

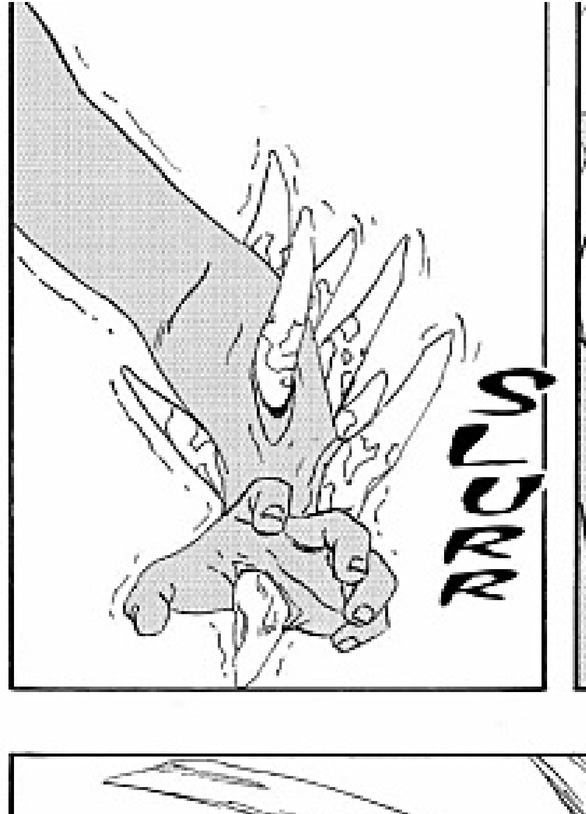
POFF

POFF









KRAK RAK

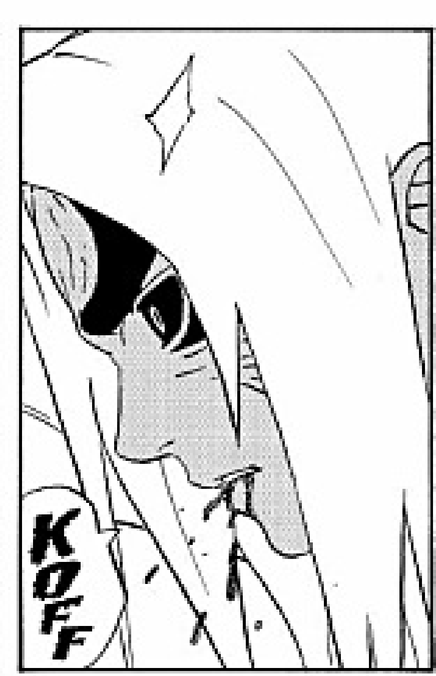
SLURR

MY BONES HAVE CALCIFIED AS FAR AS THEY'LL GO.

THEY'LL PIERCE THROUGH YOUR BODY ALONG WITH THE SAND SHIELD.

KRAK



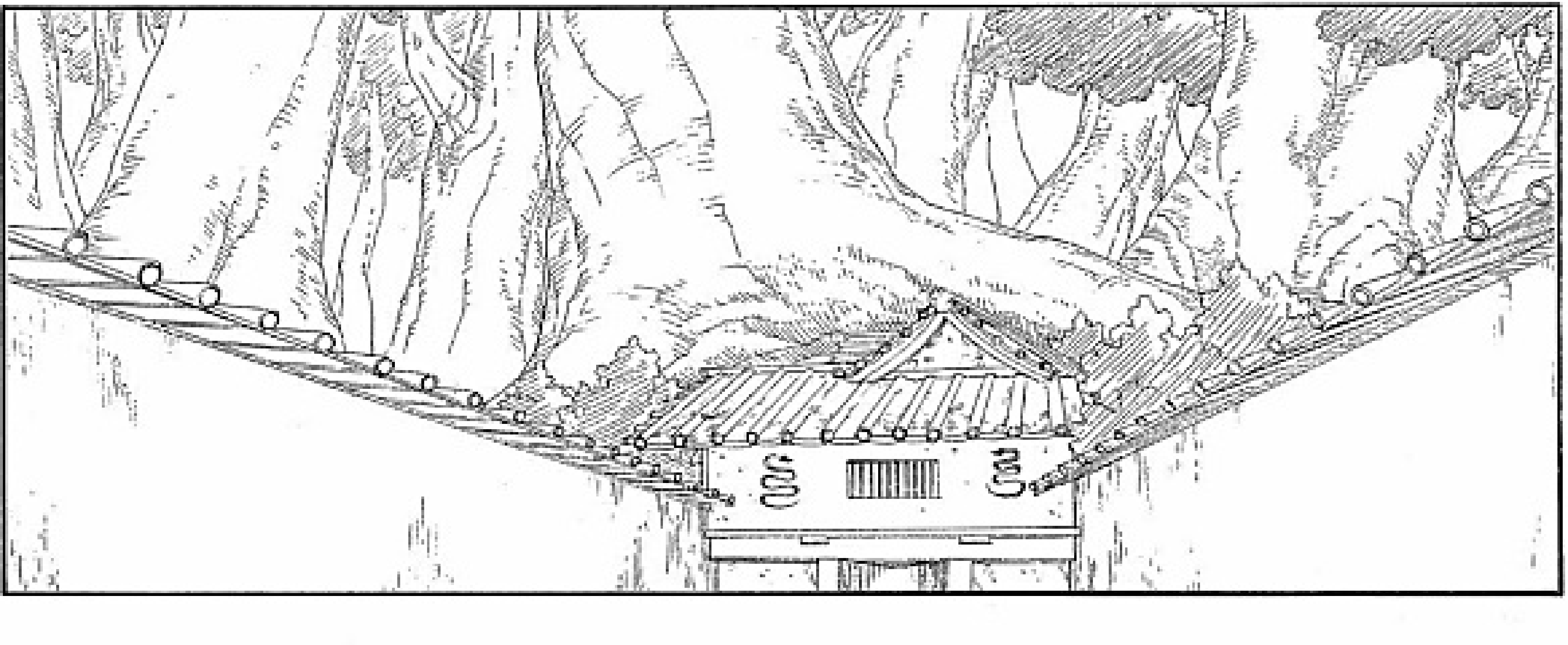






KOOM

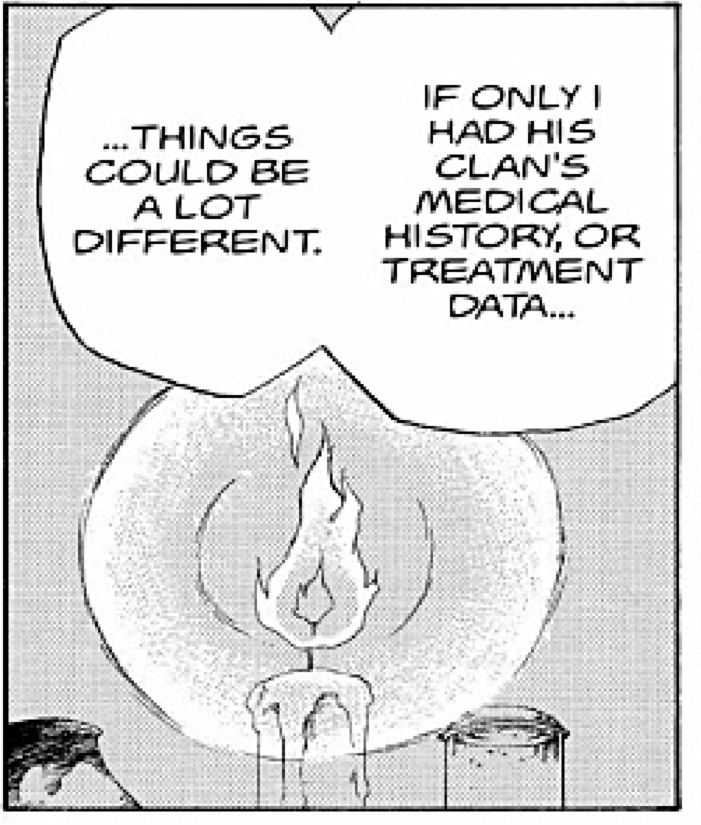
TOTAL SAND DEFENSE! SHUKAKU'S SHIELD!




KABUTO...
HOW MUCH LONGER WILL KIMIMARO LAST?


HE SHOULD BE FINE FOR A WHILE YET.


I TREATED HIM THE BEST I COULD, BUT...
...THERE'S JUST TOO LITTLE INFORMATION ON HIS BODY.

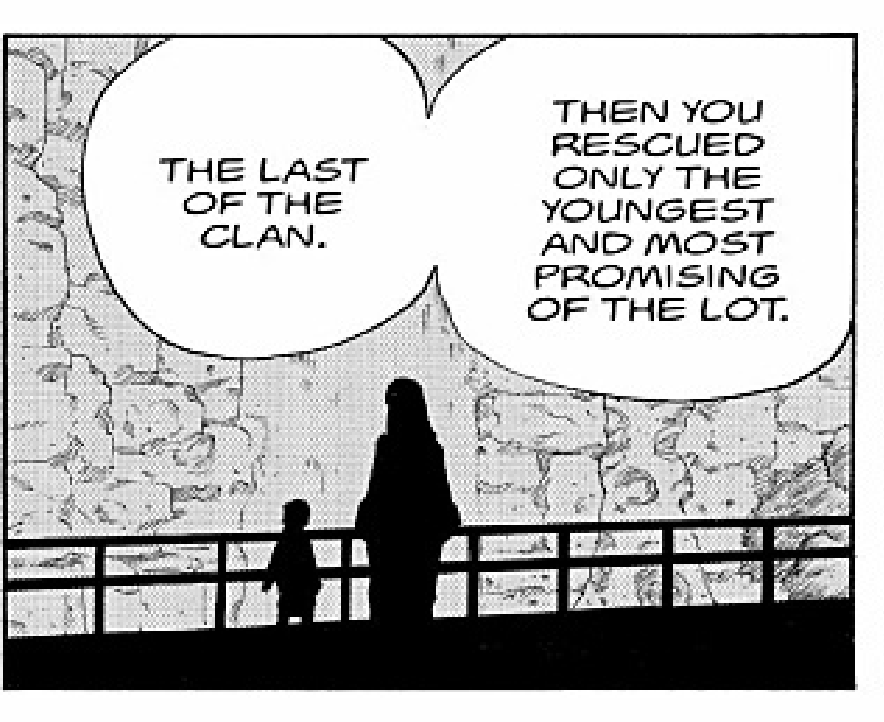

IF ONLY I HAD HIS CLAN'S MEDICAL HISTORY, OR TREATMENT DATA...
...THINGS COULD BE A LOT DIFFERENT.


READ THIS WAY


THE ONLY THING I COULD DIG UP WAS AN ACCOUNT OF HOW HE FOUND HIMSELF THE LAST OF THE KAGUYA CLAN.
IT'S JUST THE LAST STOP IN A BLOODY HISTORY.

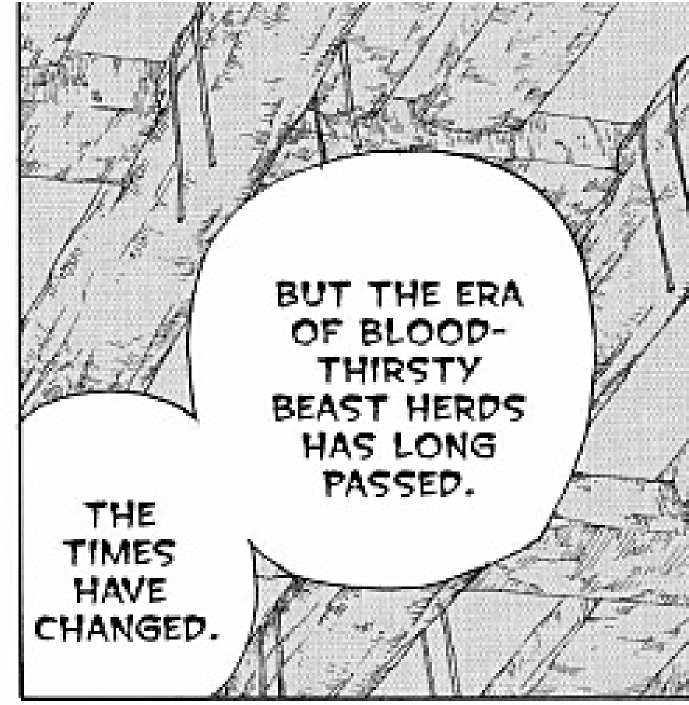

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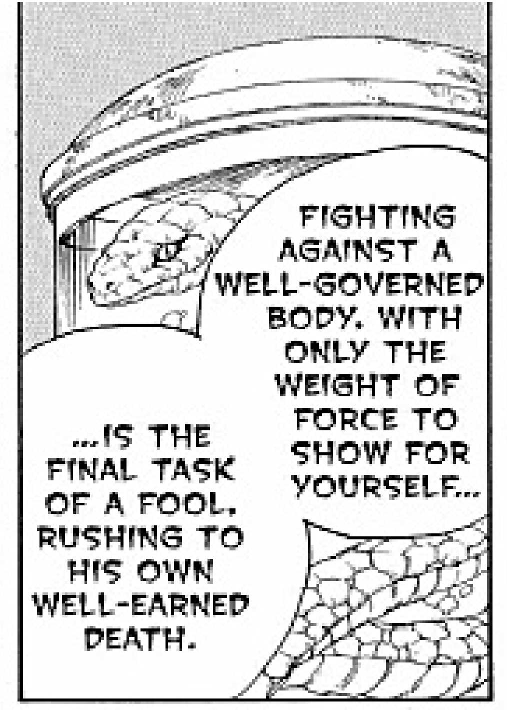

THE WHOLE FOOLISH CLAN WAS WIPED OUT WHEN IT CHALLENGED...
...THE GREAT NATION OF KIRIGAKURE, ON THEIR OWN.


THEN YOU RESCUED ONLY THE YOUNGEST AND MOST PROMISING OF THE LOT.
THE LAST OF THE CLAN.

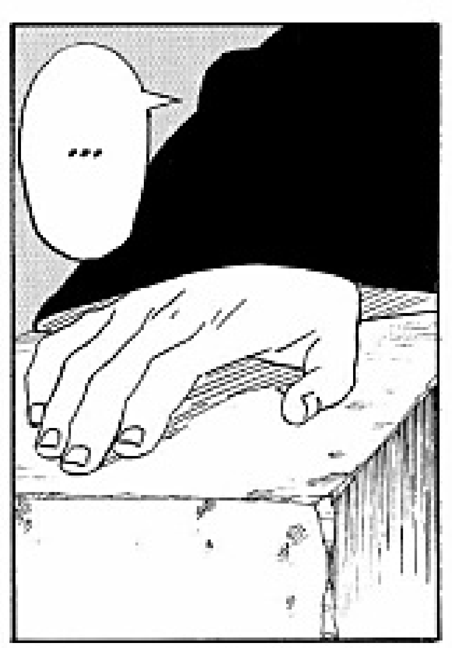

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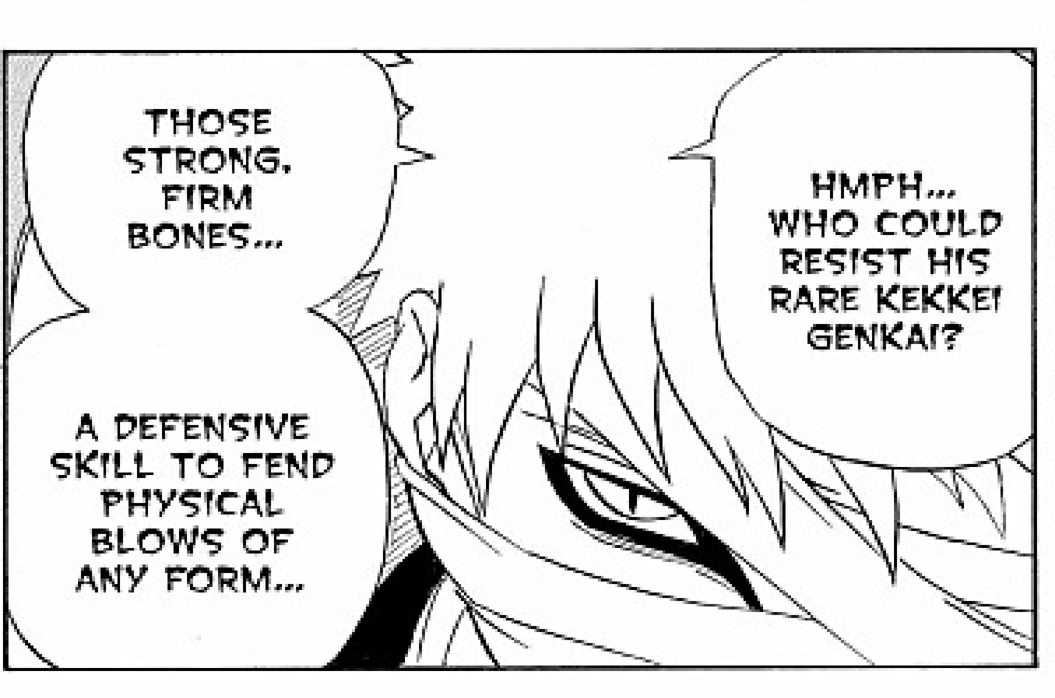

THE KAGUYA CLAN WAS A CLUTCH OF RABBLE, KNOWING ONLY THE THIRST FOR WAR.
BY WHAT I SAW OF THEM, THE BATTLEFIELD WAS THE ONLY PLACE THEY COULD FIND THEIR PEACE.

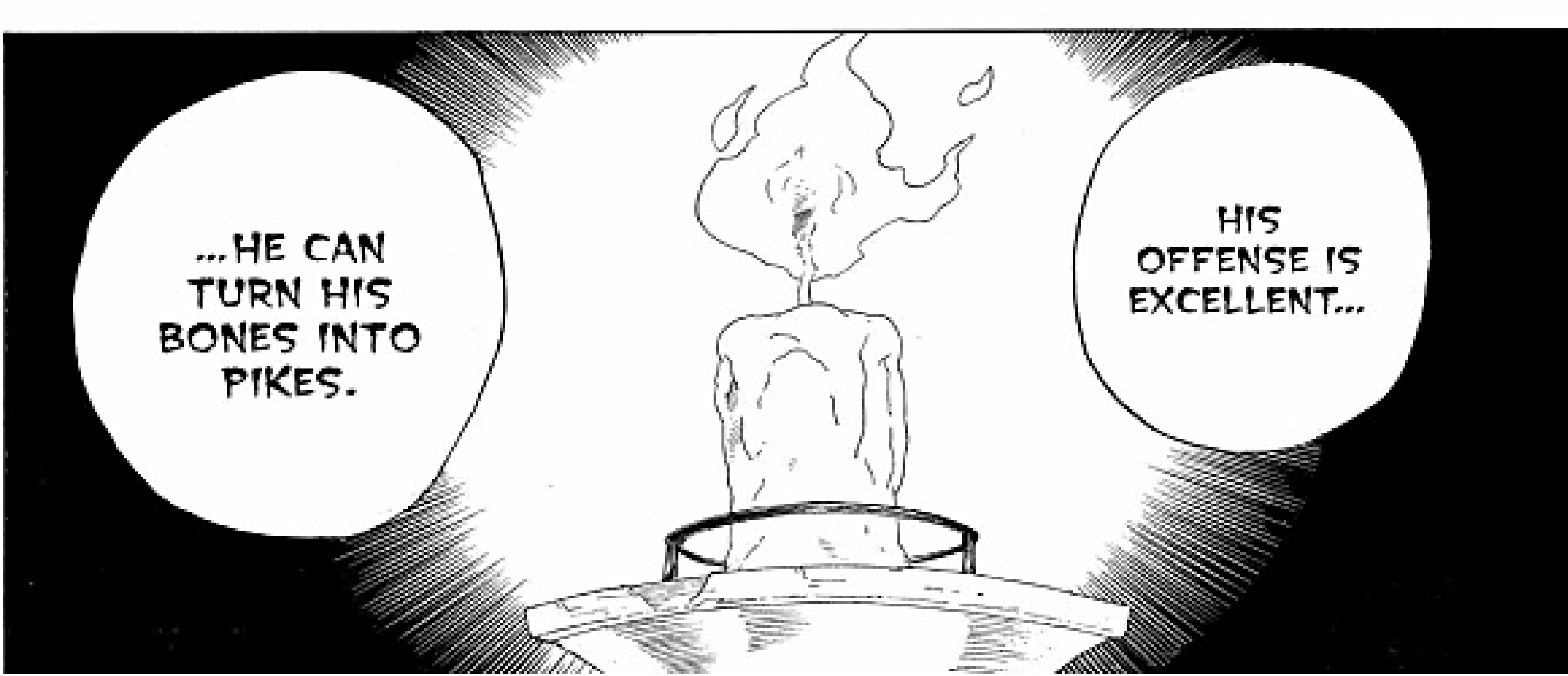

BUT THE ERA OF BLOOD-THIRSTY BEAST HERDS HAS LONG PASSED.
THE TIMES HAVE CHANGED.


FIGHTING AGAINST A WELL-GOVERNED BODY, WITH ONLY THE WEIGHT OF FORCE TO SHOW FOR YOURSELF...
...IS THE FINAL TASK OF A FOOL, RUSHING TO HIS OWN WELL-EARNED DEATH.


AND YET...
...YOU THOUGHT IT A WASTE TO LET HIM DIE.


...


HMPH... WHO COULD RESIST HIS RARE KEKKEI GENKAI?
THOSE STRONG, FIRM BONES...
A DEFENSIVE SKILL TO FEND PHYSICAL BLOWS OF ANY FORM...


HIS OFFENSE IS EXCELLENT...
...HE CAN TURN HIS BONES INTO PIKES.

HIS SAND SHIELD TRULY IS THE PERFECT DEFENSE... IT TAKES NO MORE THAN ONE FIGHT TO SEE THAT...

...AND WITH THAT UNUSUAL FORM IT'S TAKEN... YES! HE'LL BE FINE! NOTHING COULD POSSIBLY PENETRATE THAT...



SHOOOM

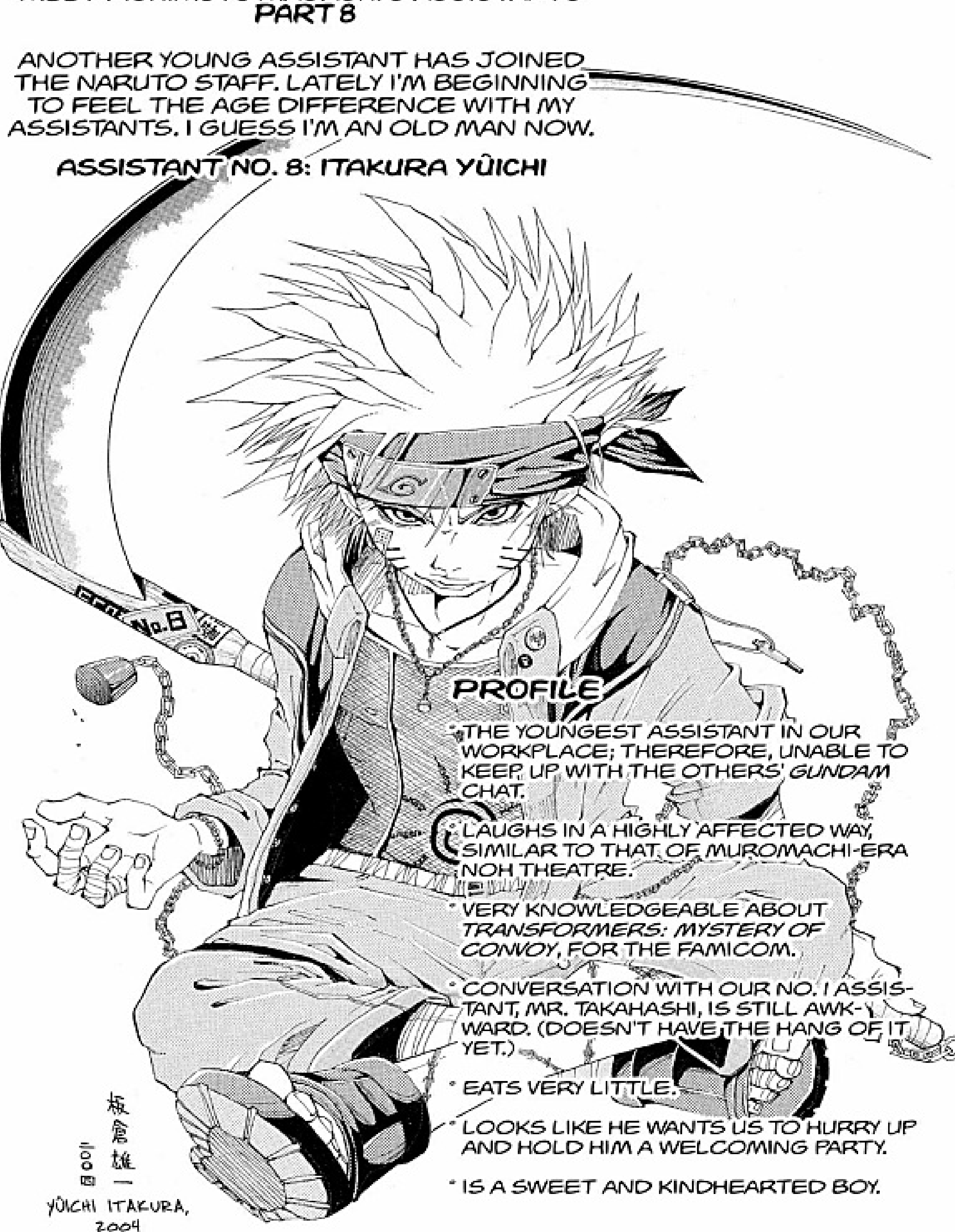




MEET KISHIMOTO MASASHI'S ASSISTANTS PART 8

ANOTHER YOUNG ASSISTANT HAS JOINED THE NARUTO STAFF. LATELY I'M BEGINNING TO FEEL THE AGE DIFFERENCE WITH MY ASSISTANTS. I GUESS I'M AN OLD MAN NOW.

ASSISTANT NO. 8: ITAKURA YÛICHI

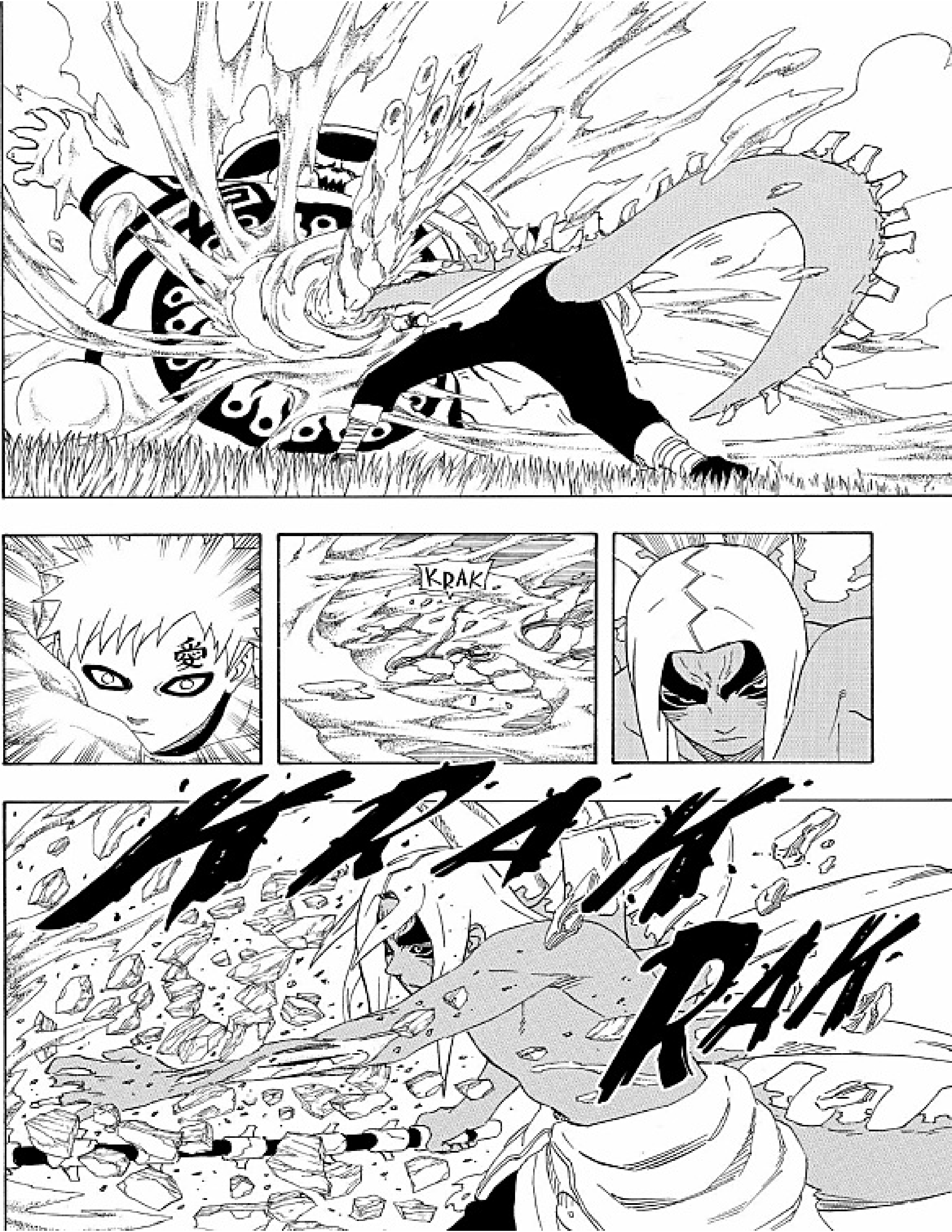


PROFILE

- THE YOUNGEST ASSISTANT IN OUR WORKPLACE; THEREFORE, UNABLE TO KEEP UP WITH THE OTHERS' *GUNDAM* CHAT.
- LAUGHS IN A HIGHLY AFFECTED WAY, SIMILAR TO THAT OF MUROMACHI-ERA NOH THEATRE.
- VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT *TRANSFORMERS: MYSTERY OF CONVOY*, FOR THE FAMICOM.
- CONVERSATION WITH OUR NO. 1 ASSISTANT, MR. TAKAHASHI, IS STILL AWKWARD. (DOESN'T HAVE THE HANG OF IT YET.)
- EATS VERY LITTLE.
- LOOKS LIKE HE WANTS US TO HURRY UP AND HOLD HIM A WELCOMING PARTY.
- IS A SWEET AND KINDHEARTED BOY.

Number 217: For The Most Precious



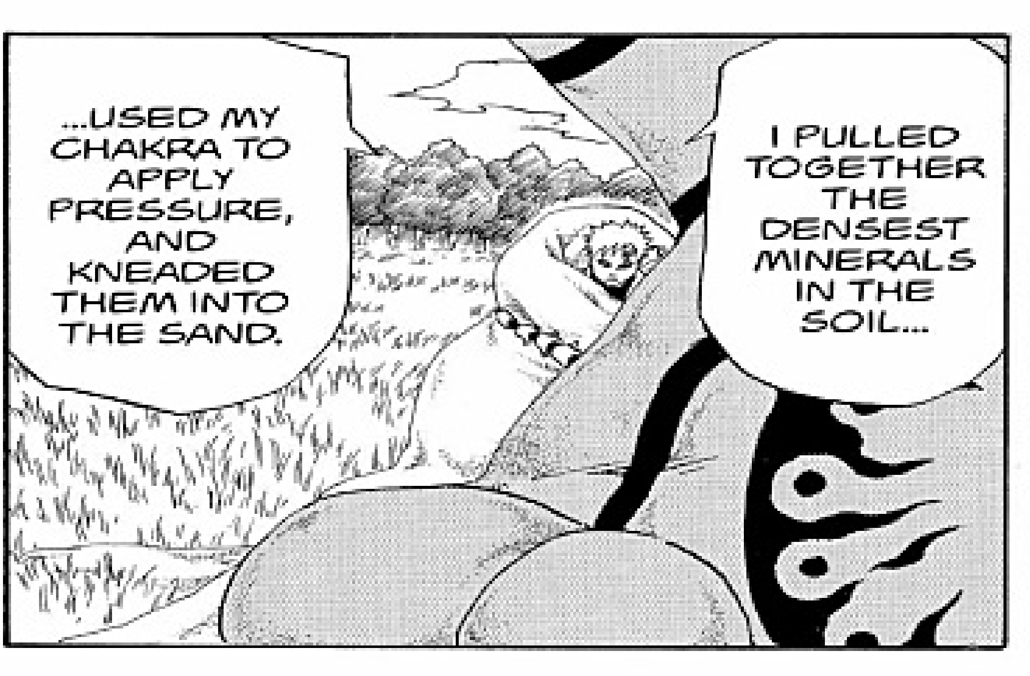


KRAK
KRAK
RAK

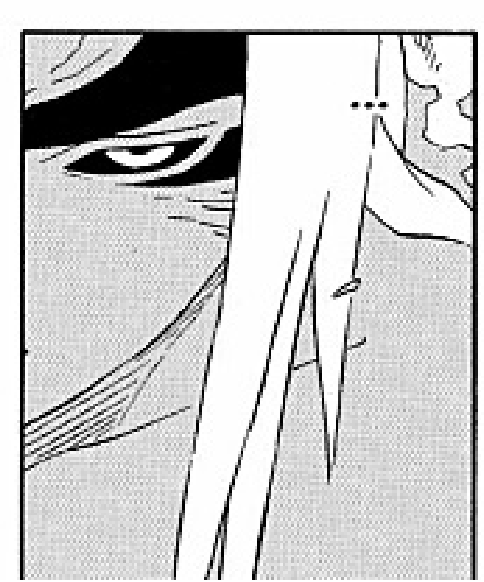

READ
THIS
WAY


...!!




I PULLED TOGETHER THE DENSEST MINERALS IN THE SOIL...
...USED MY CHAKRA TO APPLY PRESSURE, AND KNEADED THEM INTO THE SAND.


VERY SOLID...


...

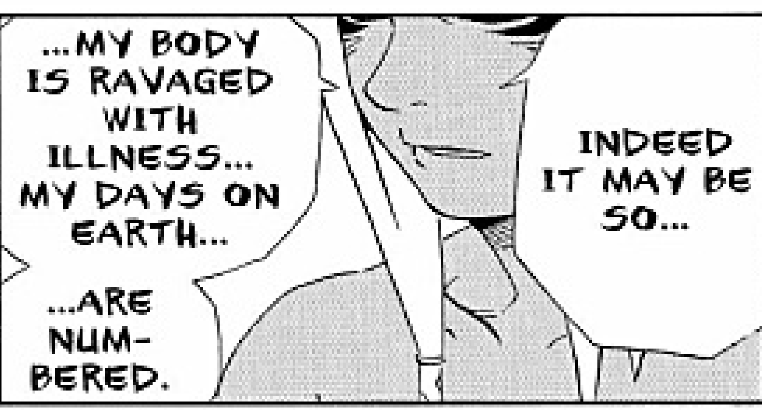



THIS MOVE OF YOURS...
IT'S A KEKKEI GENKAI, YES?
愛


...

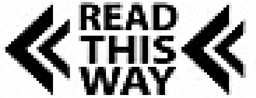

IT IS OF THE KAGUYA CLAN...
...A POWER I ALONE POSSESS.


SO YOU'RE THE LAST OF THE KAGUYA...
THAT MEANS TODAY THE CLAN PERISHES.


INDEED IT MAY BE SO...
...MY BODY IS RAVAGED WITH ILLNESS... MY DAYS ON EARTH...
...ARE NUM-BERED.


AND YET...I WILL NOT BE EXTIN-GUISHED.
FOR I AM NOT ALONE.


I AM AN ARM OF LORD OROCHIMARU'S AMBITION. I CARRIED OUT MY PART.
FOR THAT, I SHALL REMAIN FOREVER IN HIS HEART.


READ THIS WAY


...


OROCHI-MARU BRAIN-WASHED YOU.
HOW SAD.
SHF


!


SLURK

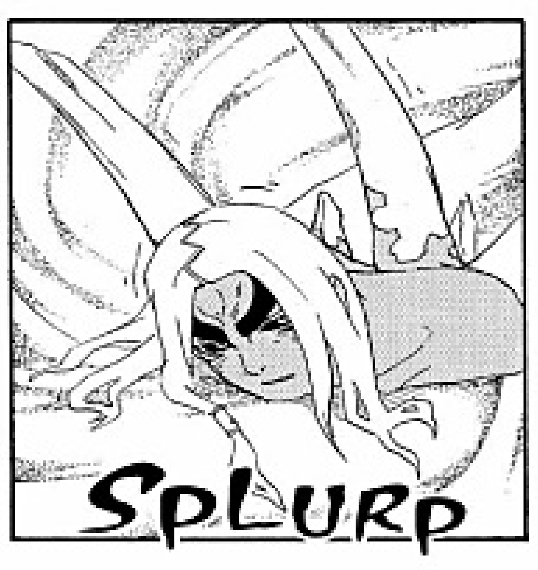

FWIP
I'VE DONE TOO MANY BIG MOVES... CHAKRA IS GETTING PRECIOUS.
THIS IS IT.

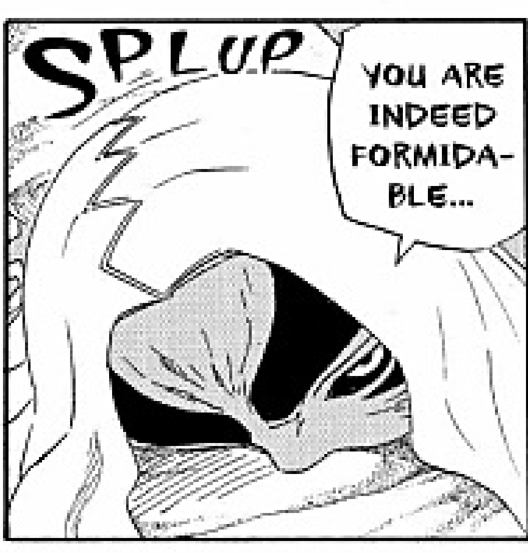
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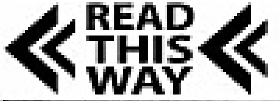
SSS

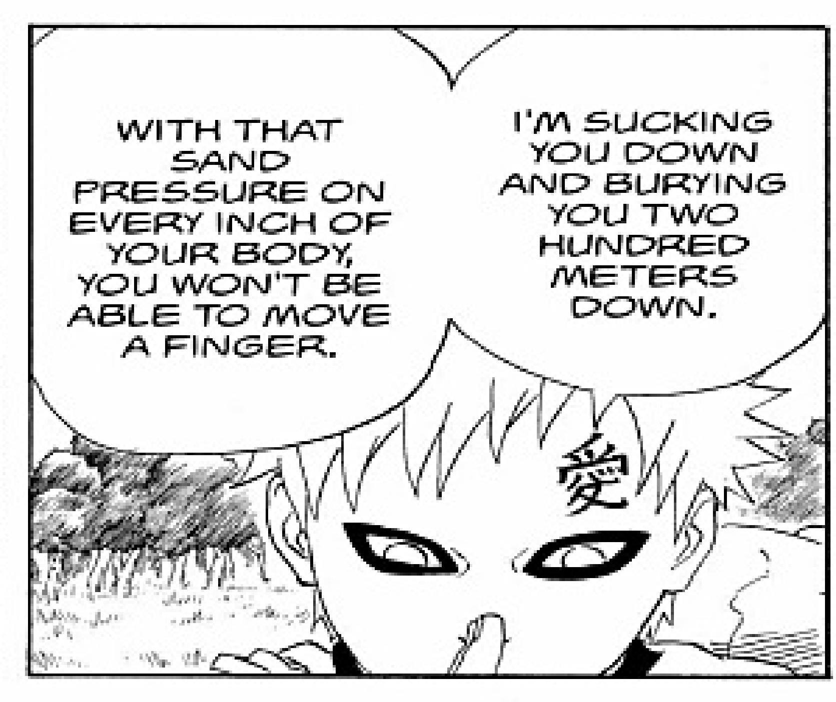
SLURSHHH

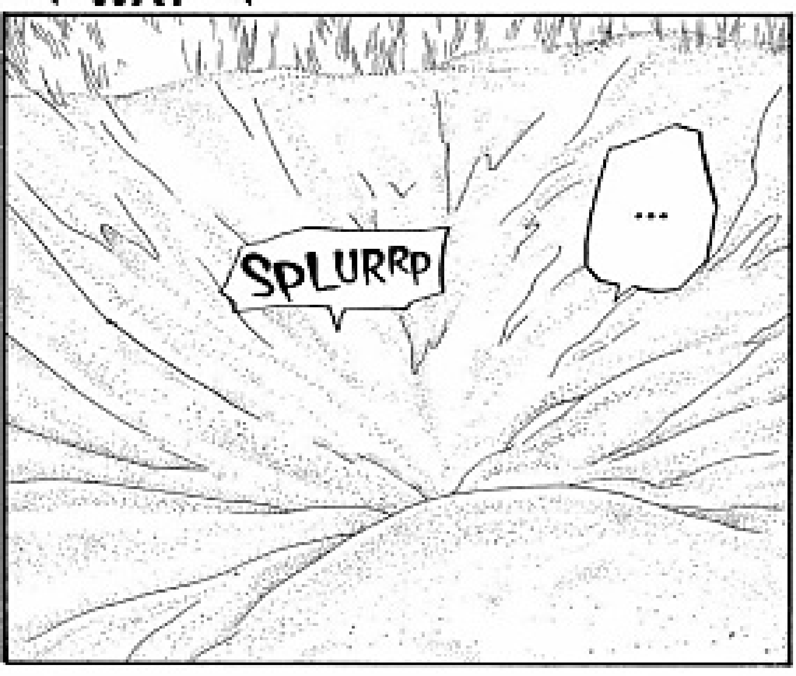

...?!
HOW MUCH CHAKRA IS HE USING...


SPLURP

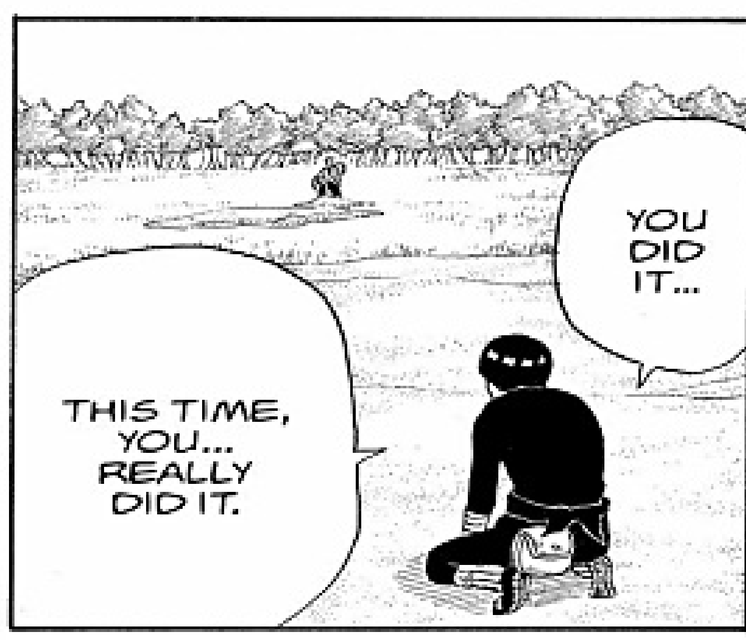

SPLUP
YOU ARE INDEED FORMIDA-BLE...

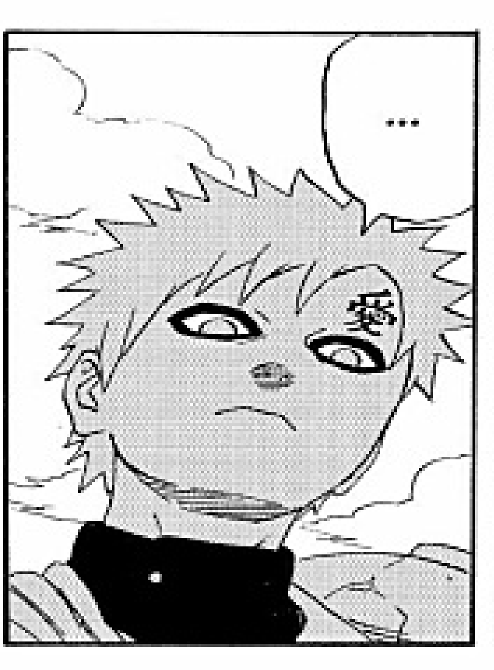

READ THIS WAY


I'M SUCKING YOU DOWN AND BURYING YOU TWO HUNDRED METERS DOWN.
WITH THAT SAND PRESSURE ON EVERY INCH OF YOUR BODY, YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO MOVE A FINGER.


...
SPLURRP


...

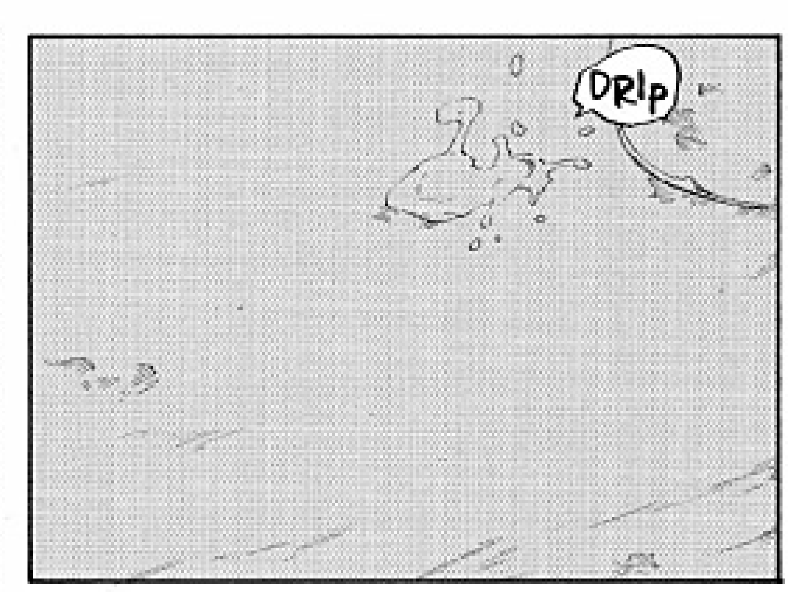

YOU DID IT...
THIS TIME, YOU... REALLY DID IT.


...

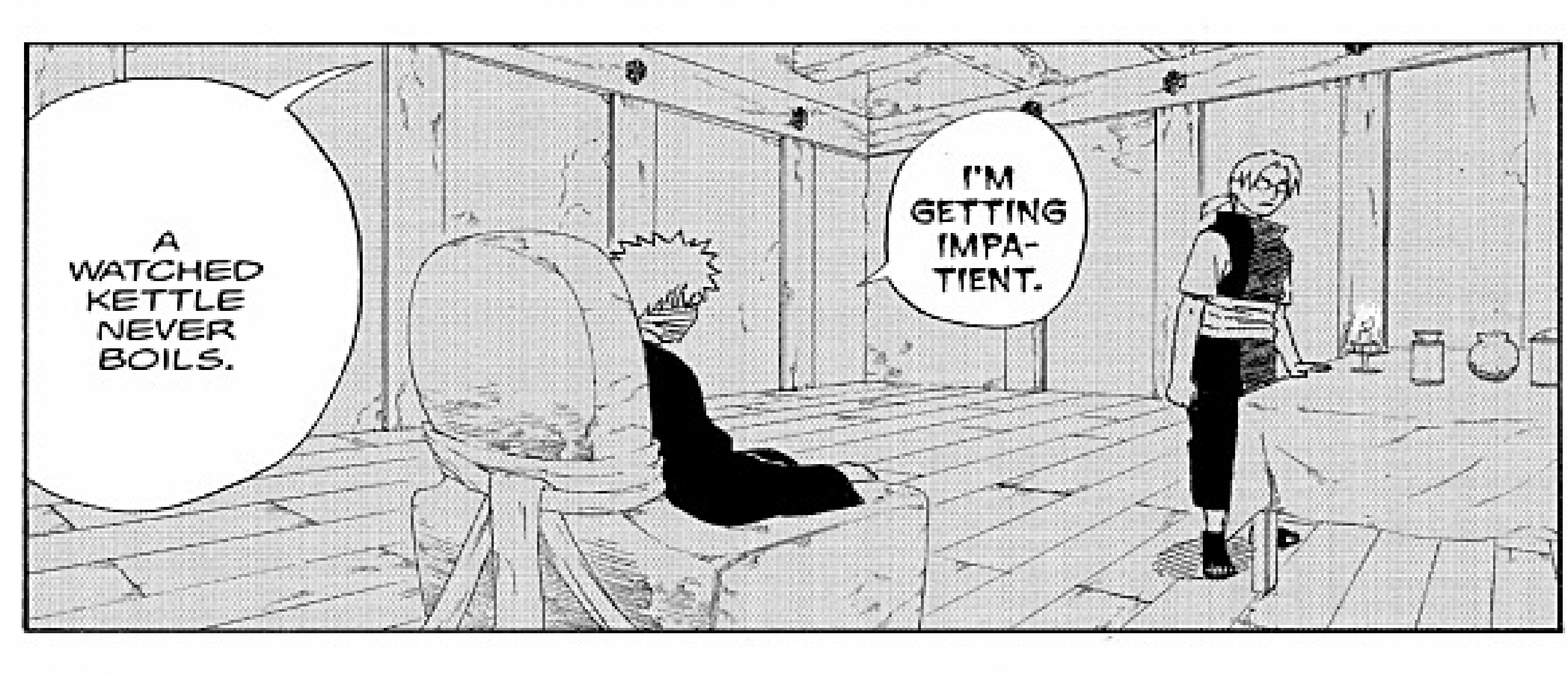

SAWARABI NO MAI!
BRACKEN DANCE!


PASPAK SPAK SPAK
!!
THOK THOK THOK THOK
THAK THAK
!

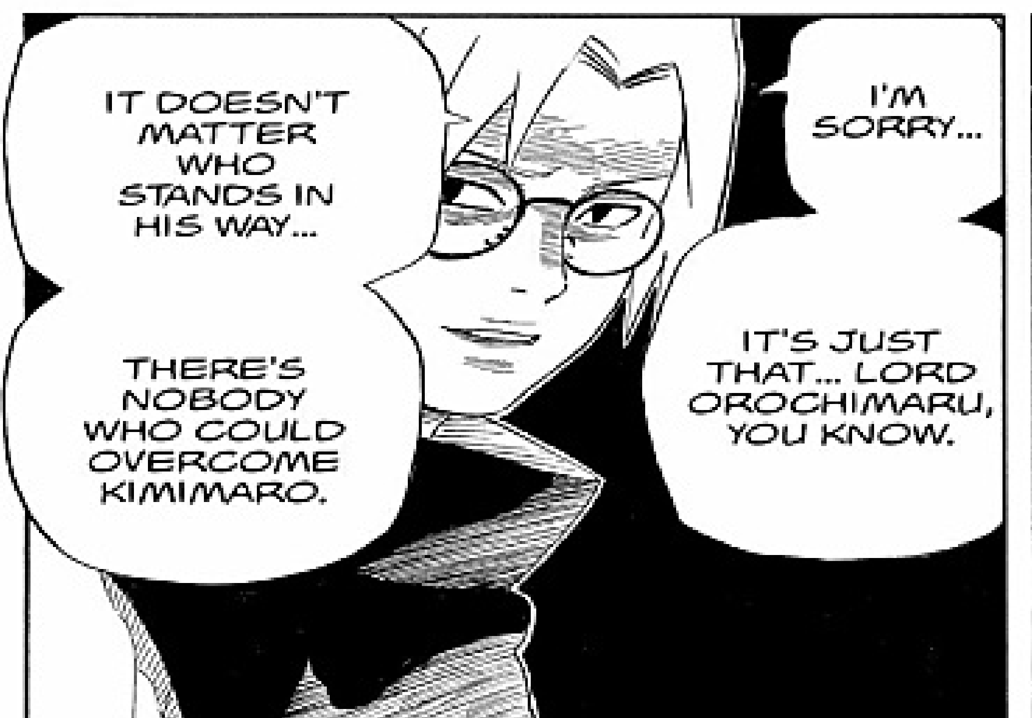

READ THIS WAY


DRIP


SHOULDN'T HE BE HERE BY NOW?


I'M GETTING IMPA-TIENT.
A WATCHED KETTLE NEVER BOILS.


KABUTO... DO NOT PATRONIZE ME.


I'M SORRY...
IT'S JUST THAT... LORD OROCHIMARU, YOU KNOW.
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO STANDS IN HIS WAY...
THERE'S NOBODY WHO COULD OVERCOME KIMIMARO.

YOU... YOU SAVED ME.

I NEVER IMAGINED YOU COULD DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS.

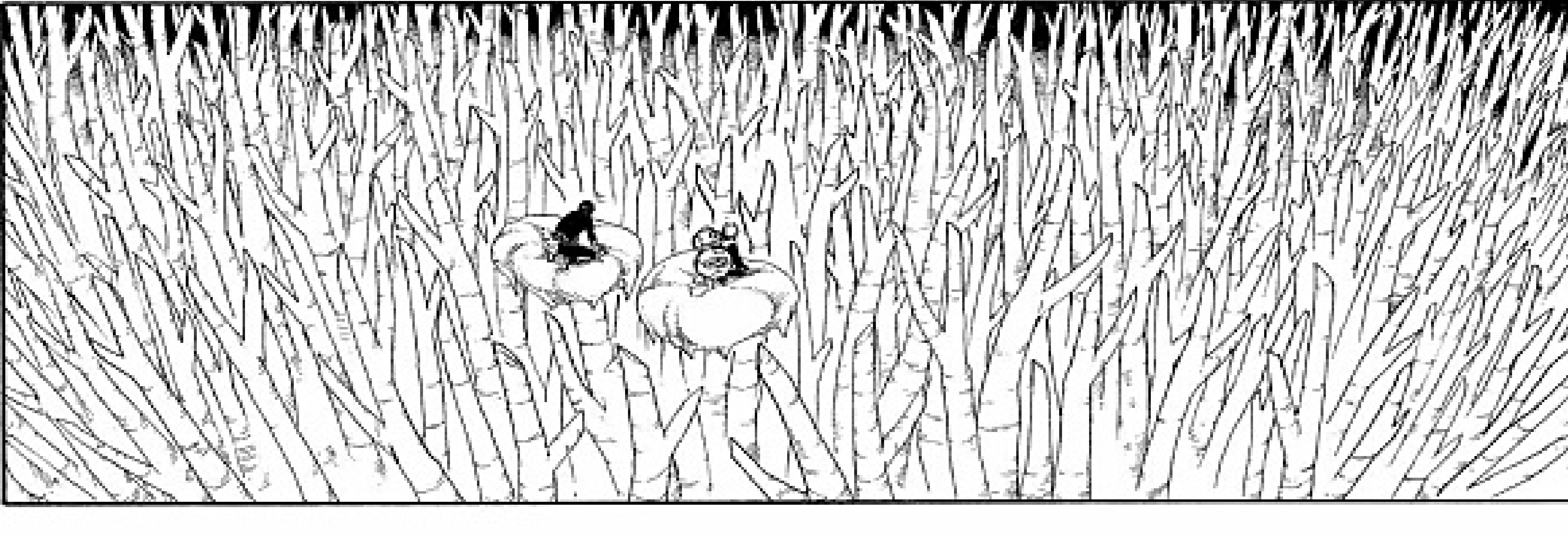
THIS IS THE SAME SAND I'M ALWAYS THROWING AROUND...

IT'S JUST IN HOW YOU USE IT.

FWUP

FWUP

FWUP





I'M NOT BRAIN-WASHED...

KRAK KAK

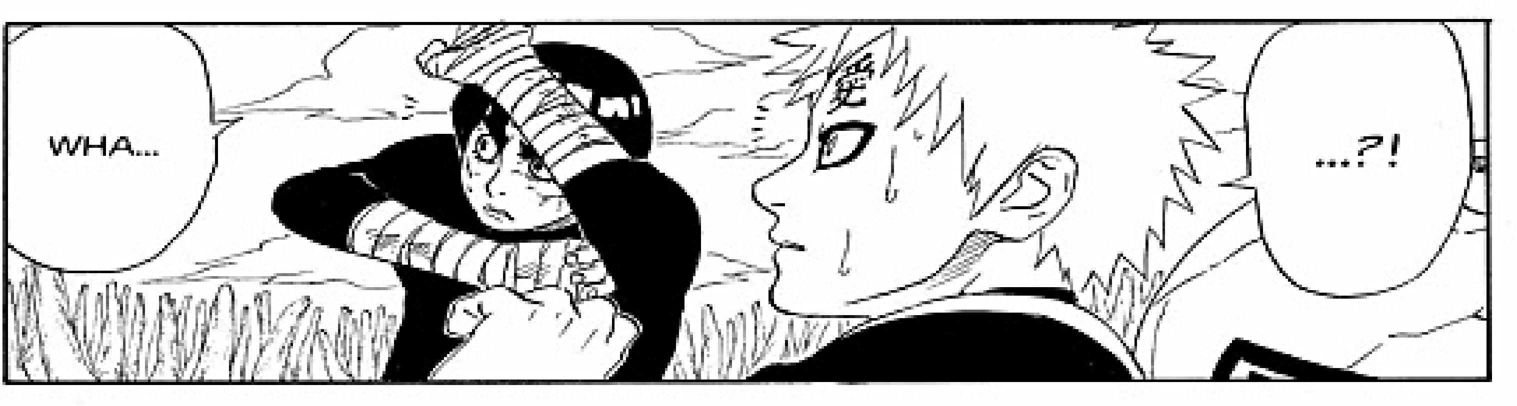
HE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO TRULY UNDERSTANDS.

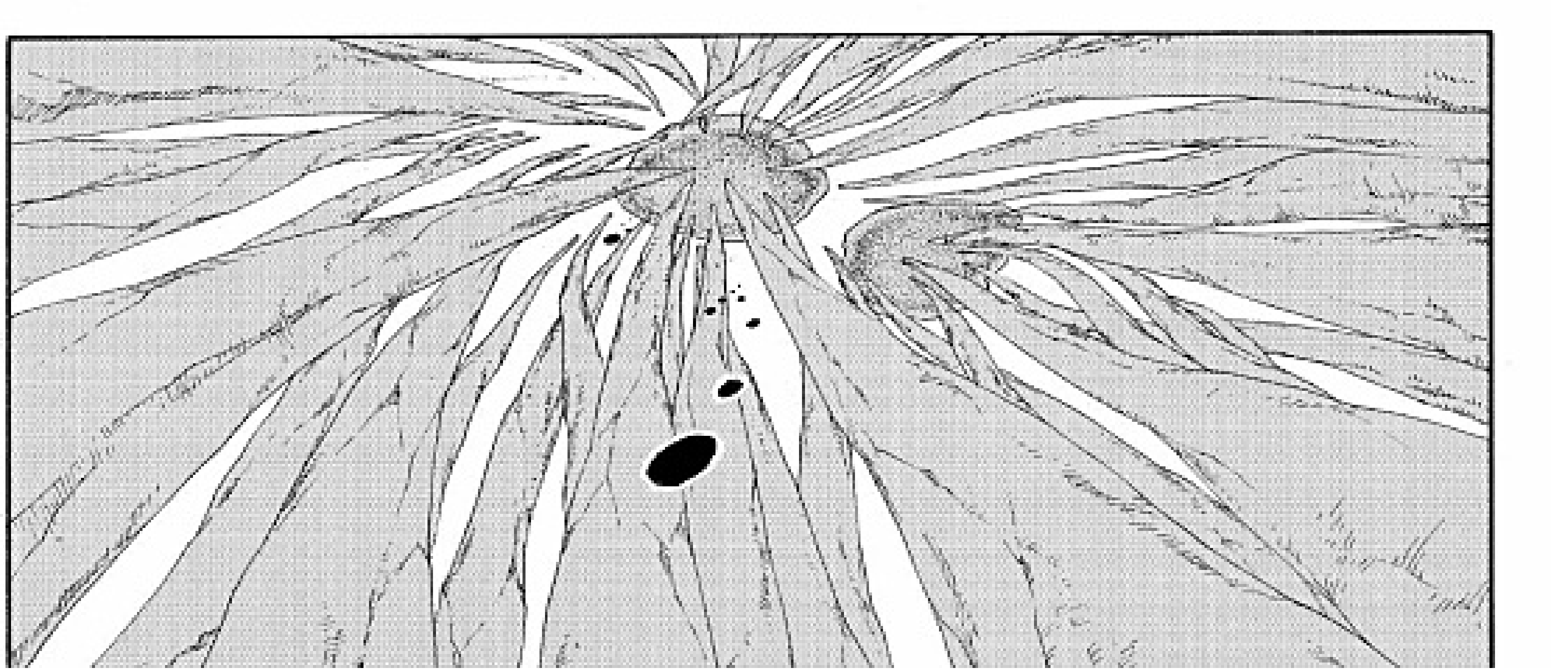
SLUR

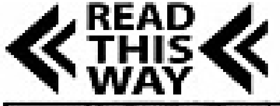
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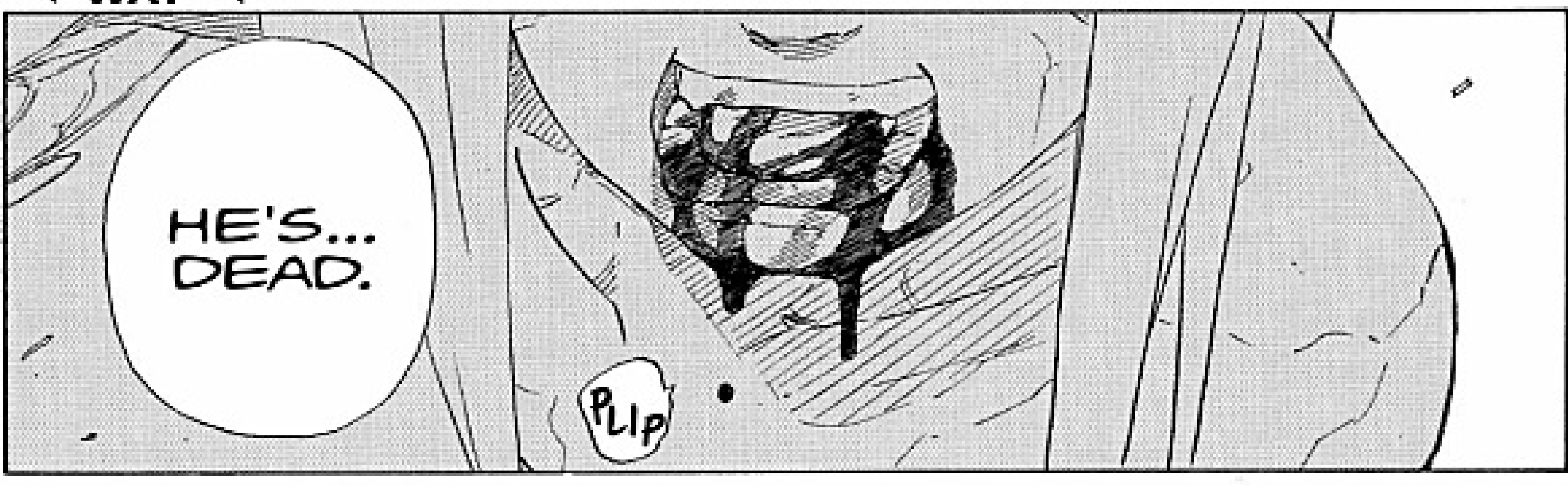


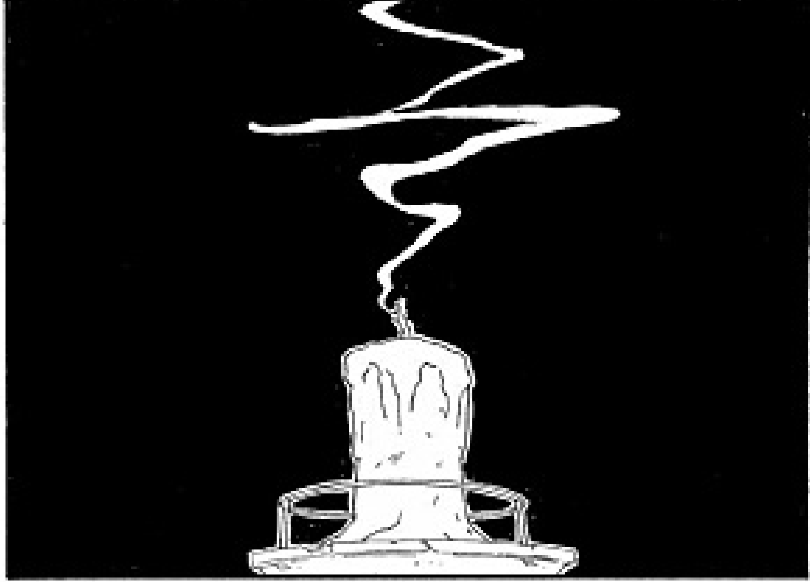
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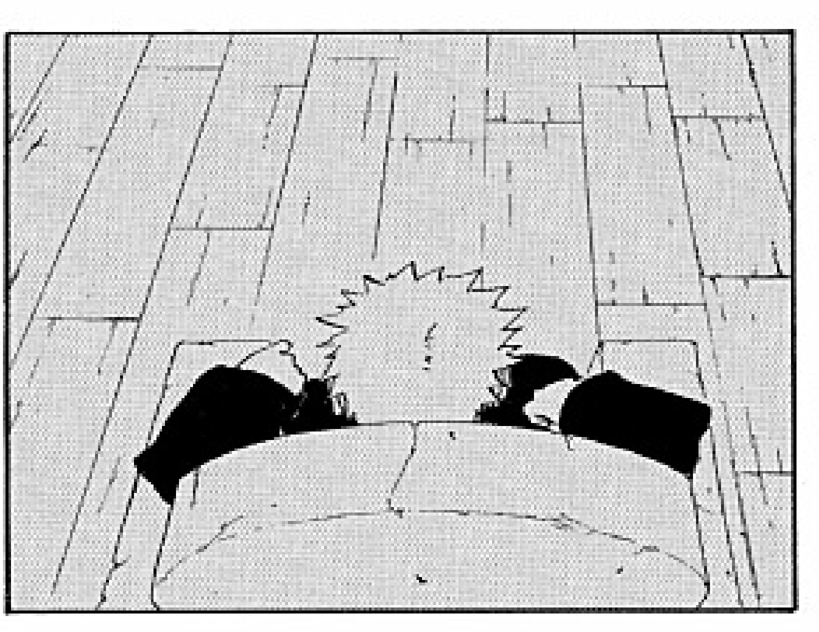

...?!
WHA...




READ
THIS
WAY

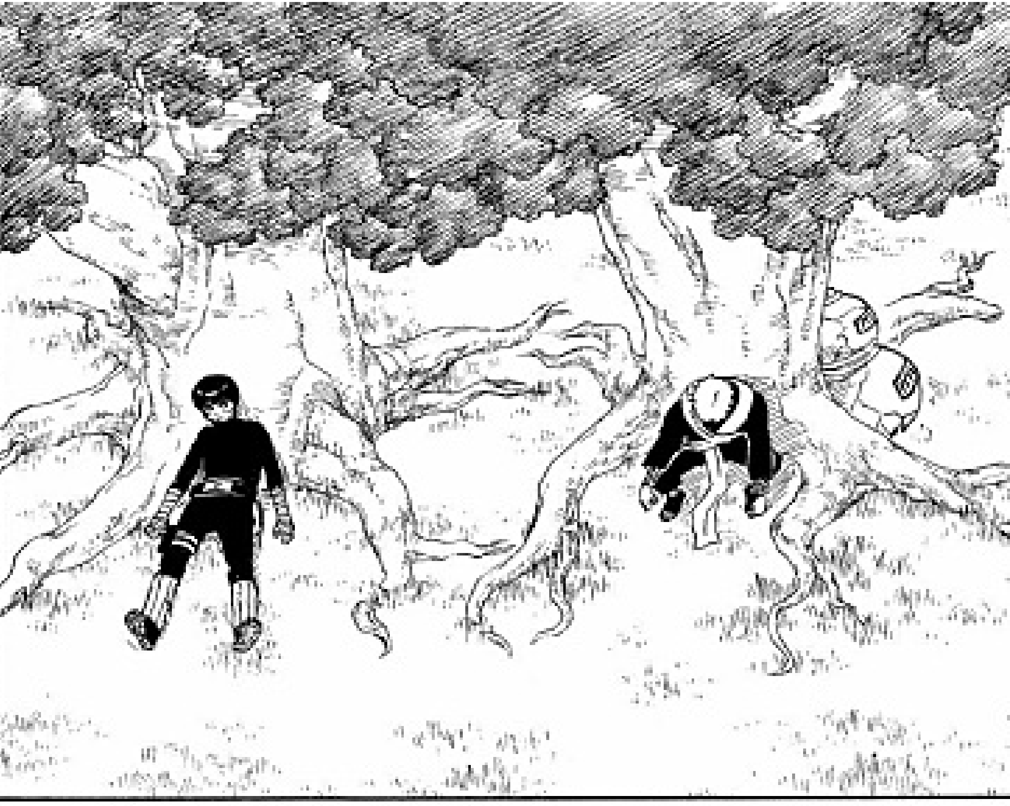

HE'S... DEAD.
PLIP



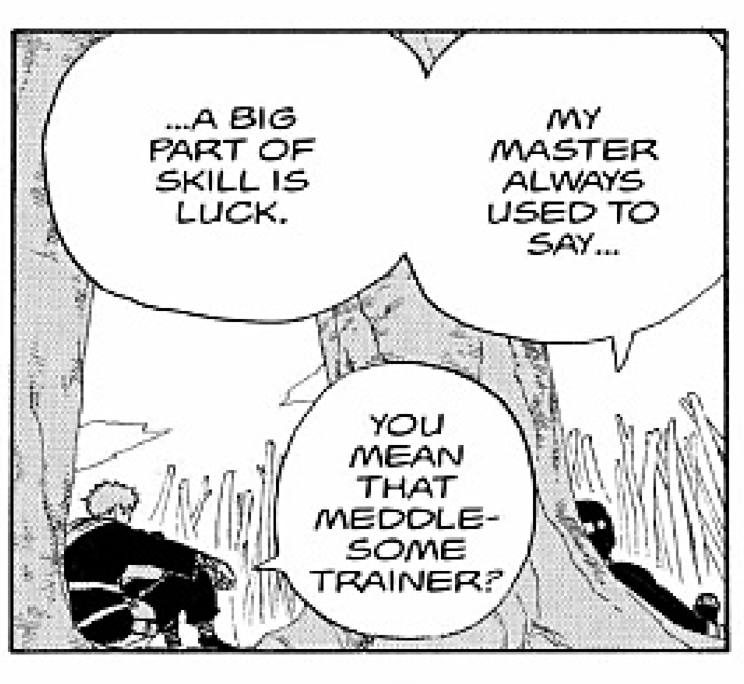


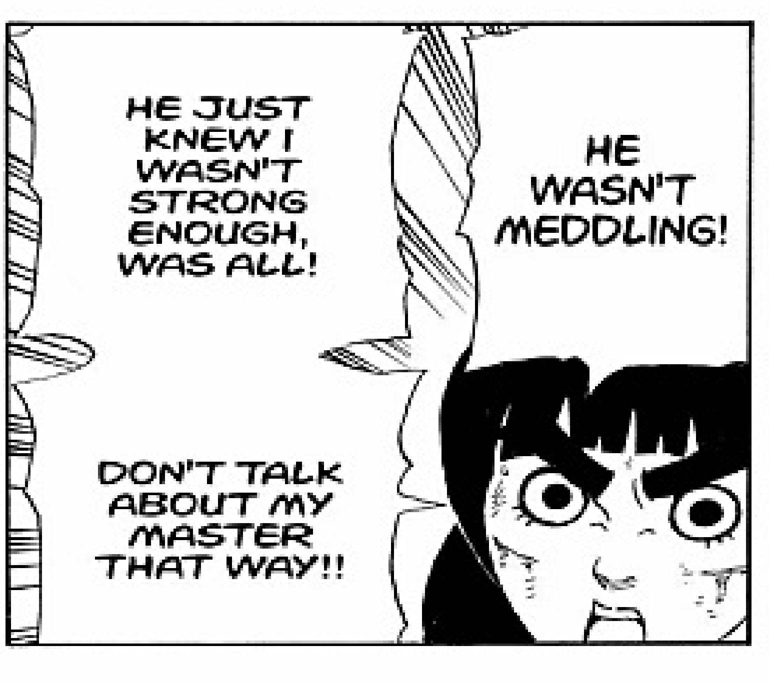

NO. NOT KIMIMARO. HE'S NOTHING TO ME NOW.
SASUKE... I MUST HURRY HIS ARRIVAL ANY WAY I CAN.

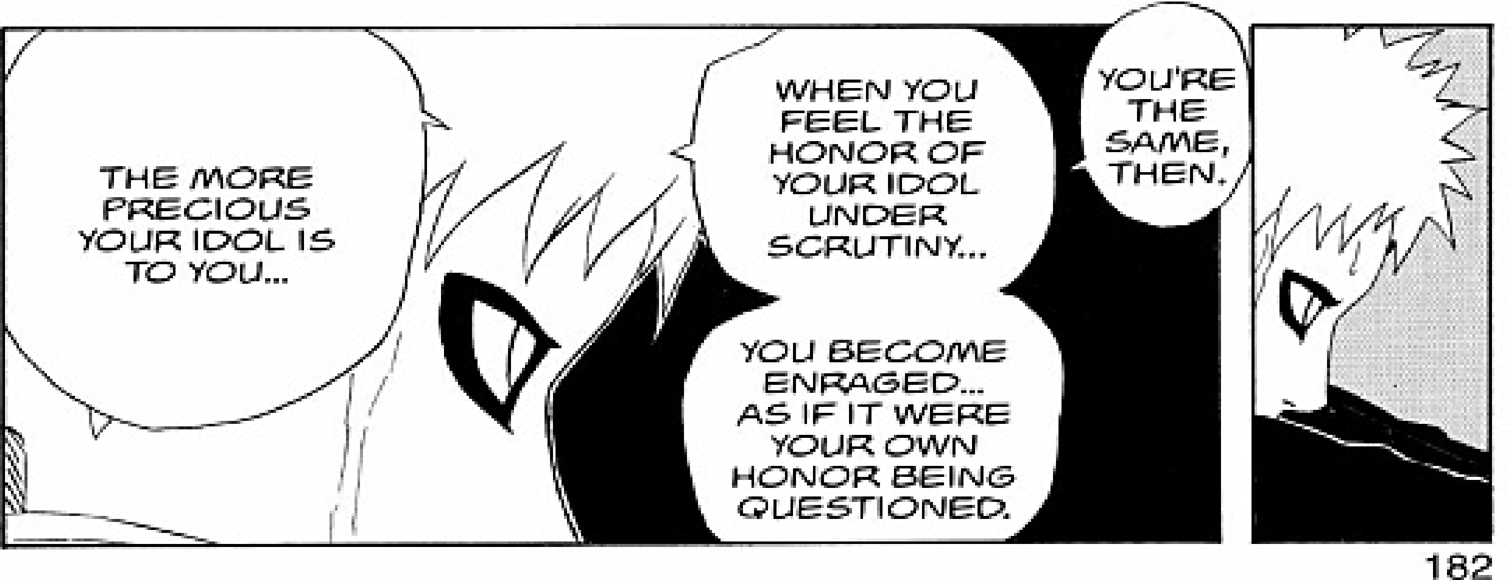

HE WILL FIND ME. OR I WILL FIND HIM FIRST!

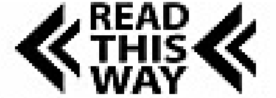



HE HAD ME...
THAT'S NOT TRUE.


MY MASTER ALWAYS USED TO SAY...
...A BIG PART OF SKILL IS LUCK.
YOU MEAN THAT MEDDLE-SOME TRAINER?


HE WASN'T MEDDLING!
HE JUST KNEW I WASN'T STRONG ENOUGH, WAS ALL!
DON'T TALK ABOUT MY MASTER THAT WAY!!


YOU'RE THE SAME, THEN.
WHEN YOU FEEL THE HONOR OF YOUR IDOL UNDER SCRUTINY...
YOU BECOME ENRAGED... AS IF IT WERE YOUR OWN HONOR BEING QUESTIONED.
THE MORE PRECIOUS YOUR IDOL IS TO YOU...


READ THIS WAY


...!


I WILL NOT BE EXTINGUISHED...
FOR I AM NOT ALONE. FOR THAT, I SHALL REMAIN FOREVER IN HIS HEART.

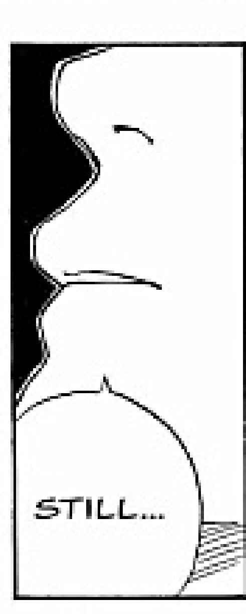

HE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO TRULY UNDERSTANDS.
KRAK KAK
SLUR


YOU KNOW NOTHING!!


...THE HARDER YOU FIGHT FOR HIM.

HE ALSO...
...REMINDS ME OF UZUMAKI NARUTO.







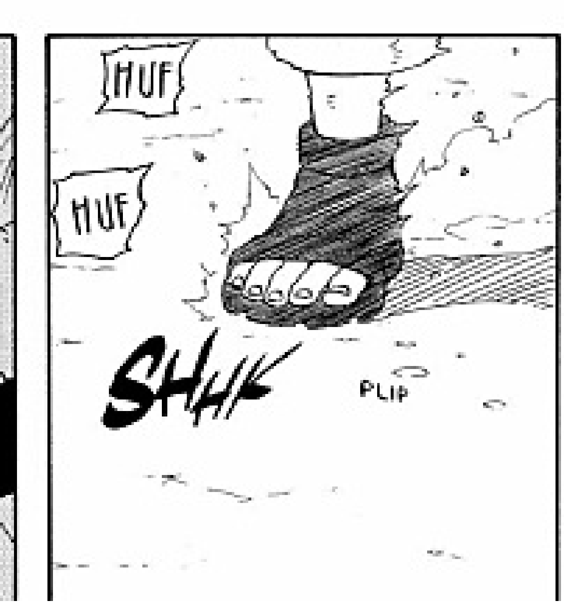




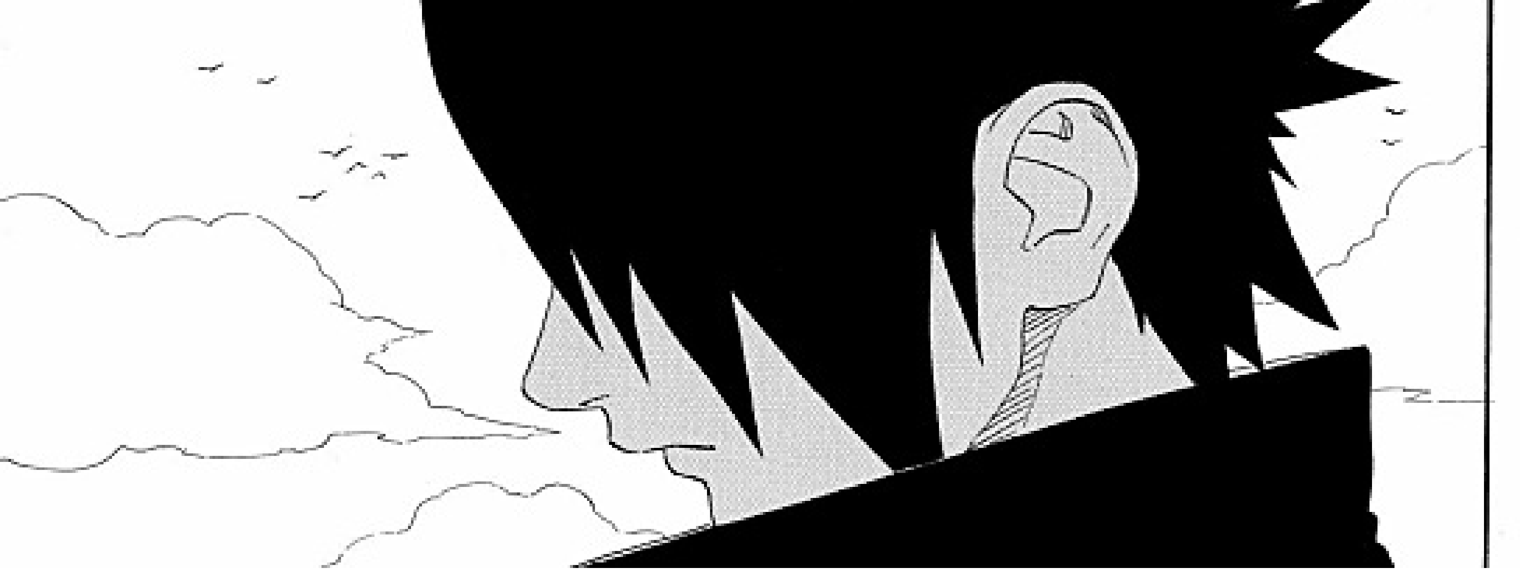

TUP
TUP


SWASSH


SASUKE!!


HUF
HUF
SHHK
PLIP

SWOOSH




HUF
HUF